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The Religious Problem in India

Four Lectures delivered during the Twenty-sixth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, 1901.

BY

ANNIE BESANT, P. T. S.

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ISLÄM

BROTHERS: Among the factors that go to the building of a nation, religion is the one which is the most important, which is the foundation as well as the crown of the national life. It is indeed at first sight an advantage to a nation, where there is but one faith, but one worship, where the child at every mother's knee learns to lisp the same prayer, to think along the same line of religious faith; but still greater it seems to me would be the triumph of religion, if among a people where faiths are many and where the one God of all is worshipped under different names and by different forms, if such a people could form themselves into a single nation, and find in the many faiths a deeper unity, and in the variations of religions the identity of true religion. If such there could be, as there never yet has been in the world's long history, then it seems to me, indeed, religion would have achieved its noblest triumph, and in the many-chorded harmony of various faiths blended into one melodious whole, the Divine Wisdom would have gained its mightiest triumph, and the Brotherhood of man its grandest and noblest exemplar. Such possibility lies before India, and before India alone among the nations of the world. Other nations have their faiths, one faith from boundary to boundary; but in

India all the world's faiths are planted, and therefore here, and here alone, can they find their unity and mighty consummation.

You may remember that some three or four years ago I spoke to you of four great faiths—Hinḍūism, Zoroastrianism, Buḍḍhism and Christianity. That left three faiths still that found their home on Indian soil, the faith of Islām, the Jaina faith, the Sikh faith—the three remaining that make up the seven faiths of India and of the world. At the present time they divide Indian from Indian and heart from heart; now they separate men of one faith from men of another, and those who worship but the ONE divide each other in His name. O my Brothers, if it may be that on this land that the Gods have blessed we shall make religious unity; if it may be that here one nation shall be builded of many faiths; if the Musulmān can love the Hinḍū and the Hinḍū love the Musulmān; if the Christian can clasp hands with the Pārsī and the Pārsī with the Christian; if the Jaina and the Buḍḍhist and the Sikh can love each other as brethren and not hate each other as rivals; then shall be the triumph of religion, and then alone shall the name of God become a name of peace.

To-day, to-morrow and the next day we shall take up the three remaining faiths of India, and on the last day we shall take that which is the union and the crown, the Divine Wisdom, Theosophy, that which is common to every faith and belongs equally to all, which none may claim as his to the exclusion of his brother, but that each may claim as his to the

inclusion of every faith. That is our work on this anniversary, and may the work be blessed by the Prophets of all the world's religions, so that their disciples m y love as They love each other, and may be bound in one as They are one. Then indeed India shall become a nation as never she has been before; then India shall be one people from the Himālayas in the North to the Cape Comorin in the South; then the name India shall be known as the name of one nation in a mighty empire. That shall be the triumph of religion, and to that work you are called by your faith and by your love to-day.

There are four things to study in a religion:

Its Founder—whose life and character will be impressed on it.

The exoteric religion, for the masses of the people.

The philosophy, necessary for the learned and the cultured.

The mysticism, expressing the universal yearning of the human Spirit for union with its source.

Let us thus study Islām.

Now come with me to Syria and Arabia. When the sixth century of the Christian Era had broken over the world, come with me, and see what is the state of Arabia the fair, of Syria, the land trodden by the Christ. Religious war on every side that breaks up homes and separates the people; quarrels brutal and bloody; blood-feuds that last from generation to generation; hatreds that divide man from man, and clan from clan, and tribe from tribe.

Look at Arabia, Arabia where there is a fierce and cruel idolatry that even offers up human beings in sacrifice to idols, and where the worshippers feast on the bodies of the dead; where lust has taken the place of human love, and utter licentiousness the place of family life; where bitter and bloody wars break out on the slightest provocation; where kinsman slays kinsman and neighbor neighbor, and life is almost too foul for words.

Into that seething hell of human passion, murder, lust and cruelty a Child is born. He "opens his innocent eyes on the light" on the 29th August 570 A.D. in Mecca, born of the Quraish clan. A few weeks ere his birth his father had died—his father who in the full bloom of his manhood had been given up by his own father as a human sacrifice, and whose life was saved as it were by a miracle by the mouth of the temple priestess, who bade that the youth should be spared. The widowed mother, widowed but a few weeks, gives birth to the child, and then when a few brief years are over, follows her husband to the grave. In his grandfather's house he grows up, a quiet, silent child, loving, gentle, patient, beloved by all. A few years more, and the grandfather dies. An uncle, Abū Tālib, noblest among his kinsmen, takes him orphaned, doubly, trebly orphaned, to his home, and there he grows up to youthful manhood. Then he goes travelling, in trade, in commerce, through Syria, and watching with grave deep eyes the scenes that go on around him. Four and twenty years have passed over his head, and he has been travelling in

Syria for a kinswoman, far older than himself, Khadīja; when he returns, she has found him so faithful, so frugal, so pure, so trustworthy, that she marries him, and they become man and wife—Muhammad not yet the Prophet, Khadīja not yet the first disciple; young man and older woman are they, but they live in a marriage so happy that it remains one of the ideal marriages of the world, until she leaves him a widower at fifty years of age, after six and twenty years of blessed married life.

After the marriage come fifteen years of thought, of quiet outer life, of terrible inward struggle. As he walks through the streets of Mecca the children run out and cling around his knees. He has ever a tender word for the child, a caress for the little one; he is never known to break his word; his kindly counsel is ever at the service of the poor and the distressed. Al-Amīn, they call him, "the trustworthy"; that is the name his neighbors give him, the man worthy to be trusted, noblest name a man can win. But while the outer life is thus useful, gentle and helpful, what is the inner life? Ah, who may tell the storms of anguish and of agony that drive the future Prophet into the neighboring desert, to wrestle with his own soul in the struggle that only the God-inspired men can know. Far into the desert he flies, month after month, throughout these fifteen years; in the desert cave in solitude he lies, in meditation, in prayer, in bitter self-doubt and self-questioning, in wondering what is the message that he hears: "In the name of thy

Lord, cry." Who is he that he should cry? What is he to cry? Rent with doubt and anguish, with self-despair of his own power, he, illiterate, untrained, how shall he trust the inner voice that calls him? Is it not his own pride, his own self-conceit, his own longing for dominion that call him, and not the voice of the Supreme, that bids His Prophets speak forth His word? Thus fifteen years pass, years of struggle that few can measure, and then on one night of nights as he lies there on the ground in his agony, a light shines around him from Heaven, and a glorious form stands before him: "Rise, thou art the Prophet of God; go forth and cry in the name of Thy Lord." "What shall I cry?" "Cry," the Angel says; and then he teaches him of the building of the worlds, and the making of man, teaches him of the unity of God, and of the mystery of the Angels, teaches him of the work that lies before him. He the most solitary of men, with a nation around him, he is to go forth and cry, and cry in the name of his Lord.

Forth he goes, and home he rushes, on the ground at home he falls, and Khadīja is there. "What shall I do?" he says to her; "who am I? what am I?" "Nay," says the quiet voice of the faithful wife, "thou art true and faithful, thy word is never broken, men know thy character; God does not deceive the faithful; follow the voice then; obey the call." And the voice of the wife, the first disciple, gives the touch of courage to the human heart that fails before the greatness of the mission,

and he stands up, now no longer simply Muhammad, but the Prophet of Arabia, the Man who will turn Arabia into a settled state, a mighty power, and whose followers will carry the torch of science and re-light it in Europe where it had died, and found mighty empires, and who will be moved by a devotion to the Founder second to that felt in no other faith. For this you should ever remember, you who are not of the faith of the Prophet of Arabia, that among all the many creeds of men, there is none that is more earnestly believed, more passionately followed, than that spoken by the mouth of the Arabian Prophet, and if the proof of belief, as Bain says, be in conduct, then watch his followers and see how his word rules still the actions of their lives. Never is a Musulmān ashamed to kneel for prayer, though scoffers may be around him, and those who hate his Prophet. See how faith in him has overcome all fear of death. Where do you find heroism greater than that of the African dervishes, who charged over the space swept by the Gatling guns, and died, row upon row, ere they could even reach their enemy, going to death as other men go to their bridal, for the love of the Prophet and the faith of Islām ?

Such a faith must have a future in the world. Such a faith should stand higher than it stands to-day.

To come back to our Prophet with only one disciple, his wife. His next disciples are his nearest relatives. That says something for the man. It is

easy to gain disciples in a crowd, a crowd who do not know you, a crowd who see you only on the platform, a crowd who hear you only in the set speech, or in answering spoken questions. But to be a Prophet to the wife, and to the daughter, and to the son-in-law, and to the close relatives—Ah! that is to be a Prophet indeed, a triumph that not even the Christ Himself was able to win. These his first disciples. Abū Tālib, his life-long protector, however, would not accept as Prophet the man who as a baby boy had clung to his knees: "Son of my brother," he answered, "I cannot abjure the religion of my fathers; but by the Supreme God, whilst I am alive none shall dare to injure thee." Then turning towards Ali, his son, the venerable patriarch inquired what religion was his. "O Father," answered Ali, "I believe in God and His Prophet, and go with him." "Well, my son," said Abū Tālib, "he will not call thee to aught save what is good, wherefore thou art free to cleave unto him."* For three quiet years he labors, and at the end of the three years, thirty disciples call him the Prophet of the Lord. Then comes his first public sermon, preaching of the unity of God, preaching against human sacrifice, preaching against lust, and drunkenness, and foulness of life. Then some more gather round him, touched by the fire which is breathed from his inspired lips. But with the gathering of others round him, fierce persecution breaks out, and tortures horrible, unbearable almost by human flesh and blood.

* Syed Ameer Ali, M.A., C.I.E. *The Spirit of Islām*, pp. 87, 88.

They tear his followers in pieces; they thrust them through with stakes; they put them on the burning sand with faces upturned to the Arabian sun, and with heavy rocks upon their chests; they bid them deny God and his Prophet; and the disciples die murmuring: "There is but one God and Muhammaḍ is His Prophet." See! there is one man; they are cutting his flesh bit by bit from off his body, and as they cut it off, they laugh and they say: "Would not you rather that Muhammaḍ were in your place, and you at home?" "As God is my witness," answers the dying man, "I would not be at home with wife and children and substance, if Muhammaḍ were for that to be pricked by a single thorn." Such love he inspired in those who died for him.

At last, his followers begin to fly and seek refuge under other rule, and listen for a moment, and hear how those whom he had redeemed from evil speak of this Prophet and of what he had done for them, for the testimony of the disciple is the best testimony to the teacher, and it is there that you will learn best how this man had touched the hearts of his followers. "O King," says the spokesman of the embassy that had fled for protection, "O King, we were plunged in the depths of ignorance and barbarism; . . . . we adored idols, we lived in unchastity; we ate dead bodies, and we spoke abominations; we disregarded every feeling of humanity, and the duties of hospitality and neighborhood; we knew no law but that of the strong; when God raised among us a man, of whose birth, truthfulness, honesty and purity we

were aware; and he called us to the unity of God, and taught us not to associate anything with Him; he forbade us the worship of idols, and enjoined us to speak the truth, to be faithful to our trusts, to be merciful, and to regard the rights of neighbors; he forbade us to speak evil of women, or to eat the substance of orphans; he ordered us to fly vices, and to abstain from evil; to offer prayers, to render alms, to observe the fast. We have believed in him, we have accepted his teachings." *

Such the testimony of the followers to their Prophet's teaching, such the witness that they bore who gave their lives for him.

And what manner of man was he now when followers gathered round him? One day as he was talking to a rich man whom he desired to win to his cause—for to win the rich and powerful men meant life for those who followed him—a blind man came along and cried aloud: "O Prophet of God, teach me the way of Salvation," but he did not listen. He was talking to the high-born and the well-to-do, and this blind beggar, why should he interrupt? And the blind beggar, knowing not that he was engaged, cried aloud again: "O Prophet of God, show me the way". The Prophet frowned and turned aside. The next day there came a message that for ever remains written in *Al Qurān*, "wherein he put it that all might remember". "The Prophet frowned and turned aside because the blind man came to him: and how dost thou know whether he shall peradventure be cleansed from his sins, or

* *Ibid*, pp. 100, 101.

whether he shall be admonished and the admonition shall profit him? The man who is wealthy thou receivest respectfully; whereas it is not to be charged on thee, that he is not cleansed: but him who cometh unto thee earnestly seeking his salvation, and who feareth God, dost thou reject. By no means shouldst thou act thus."* Ever after, when the Prophet saw the blind man, he treated him with great respect, saying: "This man is welcome, on whose account my Lord hath reprimanded me;" and he made him governor of Medina twice.

So great a man was the Prophet of Arabia, speaking out the word of rebuke to himself as readily as of admonition to his followers. Such a man was Muhammad the Prophet.

But the persecution is terrible and grows more terrible, and at last his disciples fly in every direction, till all are gone but one, and the Prophet, who will not fly, and his uncle who has never joined him, Abū Tālib, the noble. He comes to him and says: "O son of my brother, give up this work, resign this hopeless cause." "Nay," said the Prophet, "O my uncle, if they placed the sun on my right hand, and the moon on my left to force me to renounce my work, verily I would not desist therefrom until God made manifest His cause, or I perished in the attempt." And then, because the human heart in him is broken, because his uncle, his protector, his beloved, is turning from him, he throws his mantle across his face to

* *Al Qurān*, Chap. lxxx. "He frowned." Sale's *Qurān* does not give the verses—a great inconvenience.

hide his suffering, and turns to go away. Then the voice of his uncle cries after him: "Stop, stop, speak what thou wilt; by the Lord, I will never abandon thee, no, never." *

But now the uncle dies. It is "the year of mourning," for worse, worse a thousandfold, Khadīja dies, his wife, his only love, his darling. He is alone, after six and twenty years of perfect wedded life,—alone.

Sometimes the Prophet tries to win a few converts among traders visiting Mecca, and one pledge taken by six converts has come down to us. It was taken on the hill of Akaba, and is called the pledge of Akaba. "We will not associate anything with God; we will not steal, nor commit adultery, nor fornication; we will not kill our children; we will abstain from calumny and slander; we will obey the Prophet in everything that is right; and we will be faithful to him in weal and sorrow." †

At last, only one faithful old man, Abū Bakr, and Ali remain with the Prophet, and he resolves to fly. His enemies had cooped him up in the small house, and here assassins tried to reach him, and he escaped by a window. And lo! it is the year A. D. 622, that men call the Hijra, the Hegira, the leaving of Mecca, but the beginning of the Musulmān Era. The fugitives are chased; a price is set on the Prophet's head. "We are but two," says old Abū Bakr, quaking. "Nay," says Muhammad, "we are three; God is with us." ‡

* *The Spirit of Islām*, p. 111.
† *Ibid*, pp. 119, 120.
‡ *Ibid*, p. 126.

He flies to Medina, and there they welcome him, and there disciples begin to crowd around him, and he is made the ruler of the State. But see, his enemies follow him from Mecca, hosts of those who persecuted and who tortured his followers, and his own band is small, while the hosts of the enemy are mighty. They join in battle—the battle of Badr. The Prophet cries aloud: "O Lord! if this little band were to perish, there will be none to offer unto Thee pure worship."* There is a furious struggle; blasts of bitter wind and sand seem to fight for the Muslims. The victory is won, for the forces of the divine Power are with him, and he is indeed to be seen by all men as the Prophet of the Lord. This is Muhammad's first bloodshed—repelling an attack. He had ever been tender, compassionate, "the womanish," his enemies called him; but now he is no longer private individual, forgiving all wrongs done to himself; he is ruler of a State, general of an army, with duties to the followers who trust him. The days are coming when the crimes that as a man he would have forgiven, as ruler he must punish, and Muhammad the Prophet is no weak sentimentalist. After the victory of Badr two men only were executed, and, contrary to Arab usage, the prisoners were, by the Prophet's order, treated with the greatest kindness, the Muslims giving them bread and keeping only dates for themselves.

Now follow years of struggle, and years of trouble, years of difficulty, of quarrels amongst his followers,

* *Ibid*, p. 145.

of the thronging of enemies around him. But there is one scene so beautiful that I must stop a moment upon it. There has been a battle and a victory, and the spoil has been divided; and those who have followed him longest have not shared the spoils, and there is anger and complaint, and he speaks:

"Ye Anṣār, I have learnt the discourse ye hold among yourselves. When I came amongst you, you were wandering in darkness, and the Lord gave you the right direction; you were suffering, and he made you happy; at enmity among yourselves, and He has filled your hearts with brotherly love and concord. Was it not so, tell me?" "Indeed, it is even as thou sayest," was the reply; "to the Lord and His Prophet belong benevolence and grace." "Nay, by the Lord," continued the Prophet, "but ye might have answered, and answered truly, for I would have testified to its truth myself: 'Thou camest to us rejected as an impostor, and we believed in thee; thou camest as a helpless fugitive, and we assisted thee; poor and an outcast, and we gave thee an asylum; comfortless, and we solaced thee.' Ye Anṣār, why disturb your hearts because of the things of this life? Are you not satisfied that others should obtain the flocks and the camels, while ye go back to your homes with me in your midst? By Him who holds my life in His Hands, I shall never abandon you. If all mankind went one way and the Anṣār another, verily I would join the Anṣār. The Lord be favorable unto them and bless them, and their children, and their children's children." They wept, the

rough warriors, until their "tears ran down upon their beards," says the chronicler: "Yea, Prophet of God, we are well satisfied with our share."*

O my Hinḍū brothers, who know nothing of the great Arabian Prophet, do you not feel his fascination—the power in him that made men suffer tortures and face death for his sake, that has made the love for him last through the centuries; and yet —so much did he insist on his own imperfections, "I am only a man"—even that love has never deified him.

And so things went on for ten years, and then comes the end. And when prayers were over, they lift him up in the mosque, too weak to stand, Ali and Fazl on either side to hold him up, and he raises his feeble voice and cries: "Muslims! if I have wronged any one of you, here I am to answer for it; if I owe aught to any one, all I may happen to possess belongs to you." One man says that he owes him three dirhems, and the coins are paid, the last debt to be discharged on earth.† It is the last visit to the mosque, he is called home, his work accomplished. He lies praying, and his voice sinks to a feeble whisper; it is the 8th June, 632 A. D., and the Prophet leaves his worn-out body, to watch over, from a higher sphere, the religion he had founded and guarded.

A noble life; a marvellous life; verily a Prophet of the Lord. And withal so simple, frugal, humble,

* *Ibid*, pp. 197, 198.

† *Ibid*, p. 218.

patching his own worn-out cloak, clouting his own shoes, when thousands were bowing to him as Prophet—and gentle to all around. "Ten years," said Anas his servant, "was I about the Prophet, and he never said so much as 'Uff' to me."*

Two main accusations have been brought against him—one, that in his later years he married nine wives. True. But do you mean to tell me that the man who in the full flush of youthful vigor, a young man of four and twenty, married a woman much his senior, and remained faithful to her for six and twenty years, at fifty years of age when the passions are dying, married for lust and sexual passion? Not thus are men's lives to be judged. And if you look at the women whom he married, you will find that by every one of them an alliance was made for his people, or something was gained for his followers, or the woman was in sore need of protection.

But, they say, he preached war and extermination, and brutal bloody slaying of the unbeliever. It has ever been held, and laid down by the Muslim legists that when there are two commands, one of which is absolute, such as: "Slay the infidel;" and the other conditional, such as: "Slay the infidel when he attacks you, and will not let you practise your religion," that the condition, the limitation, is to be added to every such absolute command; and this ruling is borne out over and over again by the words of *Al Qurân* itself, as well as by the practice of the Prophet. I will not put it in my words, lest you

* *Ibid*, p. 221.

should think I speak as an advocate, but in the words of the teaching that he gave while still he lived among men. I find him declare as to the 'infidels':

"That if they desist from opposing thee, what is already past shall be forgiven them; but if they return to attack thee, the exemplary punishment of the former opposers of the Prophets is already past, and the like shall be inflicted on them. Therefore fight against them, until there be no opposition in favor of idolatry, and the religion be wholly God's. If they desist, verily God seeth that which they do: but if they turn back, know that God is your patron; He is the best patron and the best helper."* I read: "Invite men unto the way of thy Lord, by wisdom and mild exhortation; and dispute with them in the most condescending manner: for thy Lord well knoweth him who strayeth from His path, and He well knoweth those who are rightly directed. If ye take vengeance on any, take a vengeance proportionable to the wrong which hath been done you: but if ye suffer wrong patiently, verily this will be better for the patient. Wherefore do thou bear opposition with patience; but thy patience shall not be practicable unless with God's assistance. And be not thou grieved on account of the unbelievers; neither be thou troubled for that which they subtly devise; for God is with those who fear Him and are upright."† Again: "Let there be no violence in religion."‡ "If

* *Al Qurân*, Chap. viii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. xvii.
‡ *Ibid*, Chap. ii.

they embrace Islām, they are surely directed; but if they turn their backs, verily unto thee belongeth preaching only."* And the Prophet gave a remarkable definition of an 'infidel': "The infidels are unjust doers,"† evil actors, not those merely outside Muhammadanism, for, as we shall see, Islām, in the mouth of the Prophet, was by no means identical with that of his followers. "If they depart from you and fight not against you, and offer you peace, God doth not allow you to take or kill them."‡

Is it fair to ignore these teachings, spoken in the midst of war, struggle and oppression, and pitch only upon the phrases which were spoken to inspire a minority to battle against a majority, as every general would speak when he is going into battle? Such were the words spoken by the Prophet as 'absolute' commands.

And look at his own conduct as illustrating his teaching. Never a wrong done him that he did not forgive; never an injury that he was not ready to pardon. O my Brothers, try to see a man as he is, not through a veil of prejudice. There are faults in every faith; there are errors in the practice of all men. Ignorant followers often act wrongly, where Prophets speak the truth. Judge then a religion by its noblest, and not by its worst, and then we shall learn to love each other as brothers, and not hate each other as bigots and as fanatics.

Turn now from the life of the Founder—and you

* *Ibid*, Chap. ii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. ii.
‡ *Ibid*, Chap. iv.

can never ignore the life of the Founder in any faith, for it is the heart and the mainspring of the faith—turn now to the teachings. First of all comes, of course, the Unity of God, a teaching found in every faith; the specialty, perhaps, of the faith of the Arabian Prophet being that he taught the unity of God as the King, the Ruler, the Governor; of Him whom we call Īshvara, the Supreme Logos. Over and over again the words ring out: "Say God is one God. He begetteth not, neither is He begotten: and there is not any one like unto Him."* That is the heart of the teaching; that is the supreme message; for every religion has a special word to speak and a special message to deliver. And as the great word of Hinḍūism is the universality of the Self, the God who is in all and all men one with Him, so the great word of Islām is the unity of God as Ruler; there is none beside Him, there is none second unto Him. I might quote a dozen passages from *Al Qurān* in order to prove it. It is not necessary; though I add a couple:

"God! there is no God but He, the living, the self-subsisting; neither slumber nor sleep seizeth Him; to Him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven and on earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him, but through His good pleasure? He knoweth that which is past, and that which is to come unto them, and they shall not comprehend anything of His knowledge, but so far as He pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation

* *Ibid*, Chap. cxii.

of both is no burden unto Him. He is the High, the Mighty."* Even the woodenness of the translation cannot disguise the splendor of this passage. "God hath borne witness that there is no God but He; and the Angels, and those who are endowed with wisdom, profess the same; who executeth righteousness; there is no God but He, the Mighty, the Wise."†

Then comes next in order the belief in God's Prophets; not in one Prophet only, but in all the Prophets. Over and over again, it is declared in *Al Qurān*, there is "no distinction between Prophets" All Prophets are from God; each is sent to his own people and does his own work. And you will find all through this Book of the Prophet that other Prophets are recognised by him and that he does not seek to interfere with them. "Every one of them believeth in God, and His Angels, and His Scriptures and His Apostles; we make no distinction at all between His Apostles."‡ "Say, we believe in God, and that which hath been sent down unto us, and that which was sent down unto Abraham, and Ishmael and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which was delivered to Moses, and Jesus, and the Prophets from their Lord; we make no distinction between any of them."§ "Those who believe not in God and His Apostles, and would make a distinction between God and His Apostles, and say, we believe in some of the Prophets, and reject others of them, and

* *Ibid*, Chap. ii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. iii
‡ *Ibid*, Chap. ii.
§ *Ibid*, Chap. iii.

seek to take a middle way in this matter; these are really unbelievers, and we have prepared for the unbelievers an ignominious punishment. But they who believe in God and His Apostles, and make no distinction between any of them, unto those will we surely give their reward; and God is gracious and merciful."*

In perfect accord with this liberality, is the Prophet's use of the word Islām; often he says that there is but one religion, Islām; but what does Islām mean, and how does he use it? Islām means bowing to, surrender, and, religiously, surrender to the will of God. That is the one religion, says the Prophet, and truly it is so; perfect submission to the divine will. But did it begin with the Prophet of Arabia? No, he said the very opposite: "Verily the true religion in the sight of God is Islām; and they who had received the Scriptures dissented not therefrom, until after the knowledge of God's unity had come unto them, out of envy among themselves."† "Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian; but he was of the true religion, one resigned unto God, and was not of the number of the idolators. Verily the men who are nearest of kin unto Abraham are they who follow him, and this Prophet and they who believe on him; God is the Patron of the faithful."‡ "Who is better in point of religion than he who resigneth himself unto God, and is a worker of righteousness, and followeth the

* *Ibid*, Chap. iv. According to this it would seem that Theosophists are the only true believers to-day.

† *Ibid*, Chap. iii.

‡ *Ibid*, Chap. iv.

law of Abraham the orthodox? Since God took Abraham for His friend." *

In that sense only is Islām the one religion; all men of every faith who surrender themselves to God are truly children of Islām, in the sense in which the Prophet of Islām used the word. It is nothing if his followers have narrowed it in later days. I appeal to the Prophet against his followers; as I have often appealed to the Christ against the Christians, and to the Ṛshis against the modern Hinḍūs. "On a certain day we will call all men to judgment with their respective leaders: and whosoever shall have his book given him into his right-hand, they shall read their book with joy and satisfaction." † "As to the true believers, and those who Judaize, and the Sabians, and the Christians, and the Magians, and the idolators: verily God shall judge between them on the Day of Resurrection." ‡ "We have not appointed thee a keeper over them [idolators]; neither art thou a guardian over them. Revile not the idols which they invoke beside God, lest they maliciously revile God without knowledge." § "Unto every one of you have we given a law and an open path; and if God had pleased He had surely made you one people. But He hath thought fit to give you different laws, that He might try you in that which He hath given you respectively. Therefore strive to excel each other in good

* *Ibid*, Chap. v.
† *Ibid*, Chap. xvii.
‡ *Ibid*, Chap. xxii.
§ *Ibid*, Chap. vi.

works; unto God shall ye all return, and then will He declare unto you. that concerning which ye have disagreed." *

Nor are other religions to be quarrelled with, even though idolatrous. All will appear before God on the last day and God will explain to them their disagreement. That is the great word: Unto God we all return. Leave the disputes till the light of God illumines us, and then we shall see the whole truth; now we see only a fragment. Leave it, as this book bids you, till God explains it, till the Divine Spirit illuminates all men and they shall see the many faiths as one.

Next, in the exoteric religion, comes the belief in the Angels; the four great Archangels, who rule immediately under God himself, Mikail (Michael) the Angel who protects; Jibrail (Gabriel) the Angel who bears God's messages; Azrael, the Angel of Death; and Israfil, the Angel of the last trumpet. They are the four great Archangels like the Ḍevarājas of the Hinḍūs; then come the Recording Angels, who mark men's deeds, two attached to each man; then the hosts of Angels all around us, who administer the divine laws, who carry out the divine will, who guide the paths of men, and shield and protect them in danger. These are the Ḍevas of the Hinḍūs. Then the inferior orders, the Jinns, that we Theosophists would call the lower Elementals, five orders, one for each of the five Elements, as all occult science teaches. The sevenfold heaven, and the sevenfold hell is also

* *Ibid*, Chap. v.

taught, as in every exoteric faith. Lastly, there is Iblis (Satan), who rebelled against the Most High, and with his hosts of rebel Angels fell from heaven, and became the prince of the air, and the enemy of man.

Now let us come to the duties of the individual. The first and foremost of all is Righteousness; and there is one passage on that so beautiful, that I must read it to you. "It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces in prayer towards the East and the West; but righteousness is of him who believeth in God and the last day, and the Angels, and the Scriptures, and the Prophets; who giveth money for God's sake unto his kindred, and unto orphans, and the needy, and the stranger, and those who ask, and for redemption of captives; who is constant at prayer, and giveth alms; and of those who perform their covenant when they have covenanted and who behave themselves patiently in adversity and hardships, and in time of violence: these are they who are true, and these are they who fear God."* "Verily God commandeth justice, and the doing of good, and the giving unto kindred of what shall be necessary; and He forbiddeth wickedness, and iniquity, and oppression."† "Have we not made him (man) two eyes, and a tongue and two lips; and shown him the two highways of good and evil? Yet he attempteth not the cliff. What shall make thee to understand what the cliff is? It is to free the captive,

* *Ibid*, Chap. ii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. xvi.

or feed in the day of famine the orphan who is of kin, or the poor man who lieth on the ground. Whoso doeth this, and is one of those who believe, and recommend perseverance unto each other, and recommend mercy unto each other, those shall be the companions of the *Right Hand.*"* "A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he does in this world to his fellow-men. When he dies, people will ask, what property has he left behind him? But the Angels, who examine him in the grave, will ask, what good deeds hast thou sent before thee?"† In considering this teaching, it might be well for the student to remember the state in which the Prophet found the people, as described at the beginning of this lecture, and then to remember that *these very people practised what he taught.*

We will now consider his teaching on women. How the world has misunderstood the Prophet of Arabia in his teachings about women! They say he taught that they had no souls. Why slander God's Prophet? Listen to what he really taught. "Whoso doeth evil shall be rewarded for it, and shall not find any patron or helper beside God; but whoso doeth good works, whether he be male or female, and is a true believer, they shall be admitted into paradise and shall not in the least be unjustly dealt with."‡ "Verily, the Muslims of either sex, and the true believers of either sex, and the devout men and the devout women, and the men of veracity and the-

* *Ibid*, Chap. xc.
† *The Spirit of Islām*, p. 135, from a sermon of the Prophet.
‡ *Al Qurān*, Chap. iv.

women of veracity, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the alms-givers of either sex, and the men who fast, and the women who fast, and the chaste men and the chaste women, and those of either sex who remember God frequently; for them hath God prepared forgiveness and a great reward."* "I will not suffer the work of him among you who worketh to be lost, whether he be male or female; the one of you is from the other."†

Moreover, a great respect to women was inculcated by the Prophet: "O men! fear your Lord, who hath created you out of one man, and out of him created his wife, and from them two hath multiplied many men and women; and fear God by whom ye beseech one another, and respect women who have borne you, for God is watching over."‡ "Men's souls are naturally inclined to covetousness; but if ye be kind to women and fear to wrong them, God is well acquainted with what ye do."§

Nor were the teachings of Prophet confined to generalities; he lays down the law by which women are to be treated in matters of inheritance, a law far more just, far more liberal in the matter of independence, than was the law in Christian England until some twenty years ago. The law of Musulmāns regarding women has been a model. They have been guarded in their own property; they cannot be deprived of a

* *Ibid*, Chap. xxxiii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. iii.
‡ *Ibid*, Chap. iv.
§ *Ibid*, Chap. iv.

share of the inheritance from their parents, from their brothers, from their husbands. But aye, they say, Polygamy! there is the blot as regards woman; true; but who are they who judge? and do they remember that the law was given to a people plunged in licentiousness of the grossest kind, who were limited by it to four wives? I read in the Old Testament of polygamy in the Friend of God, and the man after God's own heart; nay, the New Testament does not forbid it save for the Bishop or Deacon, of whom alone it is said that they must be the husband of one wife. So also I read in the old Hindū books of polygamy. It is so easy to try to pick holes in another man's faith, but what Westerner shall dare to speak against the limited polygamy of the East so long as there is prostitution in the West? There is no monogamy as yet in the world save here and there, among the purer-living men. It is not monogamy where there is one legal wife, and mistresses out of sight. In thus speaking, I do not speak to attack, but to strive that men may give justice to each other. One man and one woman, that is the true marriage; all else is evil. But most men are not yet pure enough for that, and in the scales of justice the polygamy of the East which guards, shelters, feeds and clothes the wives, may weigh heavier than the prostitution of the West, which takes a woman for lust, and throws her on the streets when lust is satiated. Judge both as evil, but do not let the Christian blame his brother for the sin that both commit. Polygamy is evil, my Musulmān brothers; and remember that your own Prophet told

you that you should never take a second wife unless you could love her as much as the first, and treat her with absolute equality and justice; and what man can love two women with equal love and equal justice? If that be not done, then more than one wife is not permitted by the Prophet, and I think he said it so that gradually monogamy might take the place of polygamy, and that this shame might be wiped away from his faith.

Tenderness to parents is inculcated—one quotation must suffice: "Thy Lord hath commanded that ye worship none beside Him; and that ye show kindness unto your parents, whether the one of them, or both of them, attain to old age with thee. Wherefore say not unto them, fie on you! neither reproach them, but speak respectfully unto them; and submit to behave humbly towards them out of tender affection, and say: O Lord, have mercy upon them both, as they nursed me when I was little." *

And how just and liberal is the treatment enjoined towards slaves; "Unto such of your slaves as desire a written instrument allowing them to redeem themselves on paying a certain sum, write one, if ye know good in them: and give them of the riches of God, which He hath given you." †

Let us come to the personal duties which have to be performed. The daily repetition of the Kalimah or Creed: "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet." Zakāt, the giving of alms, to be used

* *Ibid*, Chap. xvii.
† *Ibid*, Chap. xxiv.

among the strangers and the poor and the orphans and the captives; alms of grain and fruits, of merchandise, of cattle and money. "Alms are to be distributed only unto the poor and the needy, and those who are employed in collecting and distributing the same, and unto those whose hearts are reconciled, and for the redemption of captives, and unto those who are in debt and insolvent, and for the advancement of God's religion and unto the traveller." * "And whatever alms ye shall give, or whatever vow ye shall vow, verily God knoweth it; but the ungodly shall have none to help them. If ye make your alms to appear, it is well; but if ye conceal them and give them unto the poor, this will be better for you, and will atone for your sins; and God is well informed of that which ye do. The direction of them belongeth not unto thee, but God directeth whom He pleaseth. The good that ye shall give in alms shall redound unto yourselves; but ye shall not give unless out of desire of seeing the face of God." † And how beautiful is the following, from a sermon of the Prophet: he had been saying that a good man giving alms and concealing them is stronger than anything in God's creation, and he went on: "Every good act is charity. Your smiling in your brother's face is charity. An exhortation addressed to your fellow-men to do virtuous deeds is equal to almsgiving. Putting a wanderer in the right path is charity; assisting the blind is charity; removing stones and thorns and

* *Ibid*, Chap. ix.
† *Ibid*, Chap. ii.

other obstructions from the road is charity; giving water to the thirsty is charity." * Salāt, the five stated times of prayer—very beautiful and noble are the prayers. Roza, the thirty days' fast of Ramazan; Hajjitha, the pilgrimage to Mecca, if a man can do it leaving sufficient support for those he leaves behind him. These are the five duties incumbent on all. Wine is strictly forbidden.

We must pass on. We have not the time to deal, and it matters not, with the great division into Sunnis and Shīahs, and the question of Imāms—interesting truly; but I must leave that untouched, for time is passing.

After the exoteric side of a religion comes its philosophy. Now here in modern Islām there is much to miss; but what Islām was in the days of the might of its thought, no words can be too strong to express. "Acquire knowledge," the Prophet says in one of his sermons, "because he who acquires it in the way of the Lord performs an act of piety; who speaks of it, praises the Lord; who seeks it adores God; who dispenses instruction in it bestows alms; and who imparts it to its fitting objects performs an act of devotion to God. Knowledge enables its possessor to distinguish what it forbidden from what is not; it lights the way to heaven; it is our friend in the desert, our society in solitude, our companion when bereft of friends; it guides us to happiness; it sustains us in misery; it is our ornament in the company of friends; it serves

* *Spirit of Islām*, p. 185.

as an armor against our enemies. With knowledge, the servant of God rises to the height of goodness and to a noble position, associates with sovereigns in this world, and attains to the perfection of happiness in the next." * And there is a word of the Prophet which seems to me so striking, so unexpected, that I repeat it here: "The ink of the scholar is more valuable than the blood of the martyr." Unexpected declaration for a Prophet for whom so many had been martyred. And yet how profoundly true. Ali, the beloved, the son-in-law of the Prophet—from him sprang all Islām's learning and the wonderful outburst of her knowledge. He would lecture amid struggle and warfare. He would stand up to teach, and to bid young men study and learn and master the sciences above all other things. And there is a definition given of science which is worthy the quoting: "Enlightenment of the heart is its essence; truth its principal object; inspiration its guide; reason its accepter; God its inspirer; and the words of man its utterer." † Not many grander definitions of science than that have been spoken by human lips. For one hundred years the followers of Ali studied, while the other side of the Musulmān world was fighting and conquering; one hundred years of quiet study, and then the work began; and what a work! From the eighth century till the fourteenth in the hand of the child of Islām is gripped the torch of science. Wherever they go they carry learning with them; they conquer, but where they conquer they found schools, universities.

* *Ibid*, pp. 531, 532.
† *Ibid*, p. 537.

The Universities of Cairo, of Baghdad, of Cordova in far western Spain, grow up under the shadow of the Prophet. Christian Europe crowds to Andalusia, to learn from the Muṣulmān teacher the elements of forgotten science; they bring astronomy, they translate the Siḍḍhānṭa of India and other books; they write treatises on astronony, on chemistry, on mathematics. Pope Sylvester II., who sat on the Papal throne of Christendom, as a youth was a student in the University of Cordova, and learned there the mathematics that brought him later under the charge of heresy and of being the child of the devil. They invent; what do they not invent? They take up mathematics from the Hiṇḍū and the Greek; they discover equations of the second degree; then the quadratic; then the Binomial theorem; they discover the sine and cosine in Trigonometry; they discover or invent spherical Trigonometry; they make the first telescope; they study the stars; they measure the size of the earth within a degree or two by measurements taken on the shores of the Red Sea. What are these men who grow up under Islām? They make a new architecture, they discover a new music, they teach scientific agriculture, they bring manufactures to the highest pitch of excellence; but is that all? No. In philosophy they are still greater; in philosophy they dive into the very Being of the Supreme; they declare the One Absolute, and the relation of the many to the One; they proclaim the unity of the human Spirit with the Divine; they deal with time and space, and the acute metaphysical brain of Arabia writes the most marvellous phi-

losophic truths, pure Veḍānṭa, my Hinḍū brothers, as all true knowledge ends in that. The names of Ibn Sīna and Ibn Rushd here stand supreme.

Such the outburst of learning for six centuries that followed on the footsteps of the Prophet. Oh! if my brothers of Islām to-day would take these great works of their mighty men, and translate them into modern tongues; if they would teach them, as they do not teach them, to their boys; if they would train them, as they do not train them, in the knowledge of their own philosophy; then they would lift high the name of Islām among the philosophies of the world; and every child of Islām who is an educated man should know this teaching as a Hinḍū knows his Veḍānṭa, and so should be able to justify his Prophet in the eyes of the intellect of the world.

I said that part of a religion is mysticism, and Islām must have a mystic side. Ali again the beginner, and the followers of Ali the transmitters. In the year following the flight from Mecca, forty-five poor men bound themselves together to follow God and His Prophet, to live as a community, and to observe ascetic practices. It is the seed of Sūfīsm, the mystic side of Islām. They teach that "all is from God".* They teach there is nought save God and that all the universe is but a mirror of Him. They teach that there is one perfect beauty and that all that is beautiful is only a ray from Him. They teach there is only one love, the love of God, and all other loves are only loves as they form part of that.

* *Al Qurān*, Chap. iv.

They teach that He alone is true Being and that all else is non-being, and that man who is Himself can by illumination rise from non-being to Being and return whence he came. Ah! see how they have sung of His love, the devotion which breathes in the poetry of Persia:

Thou art absolute Being; all else is but a phantasm,
For in Thy Universe all beings are one.
Thy world-captivating Beauty, in order to display its perfections,
Appears in thousands of mirrors, but it is one.
Although Thy Beauty accompanies all the beautiful,
In truth the unique and incomparable Heart-enslaver is one.*

And again:

Not-Being is the mirror of absolute Being,
Whence is apparent the reflexion of God's splendor.
When Not-Being became opposed to Being
A reflexion thereof was at once produced.
That Unity was manifested through this Plurality;
One, when you enumerate it, becomes many.
Numeration though it has One for its basis,
Hath, notwithstanding, never an end.
Since Not-Being was in its essence clear,
Through it the hidden Treasure became manifest.
Repeat the tradition: "I was a hidden Treasure,"
That thou mayest plainly behold the hidden mystery.
Not-Being is the mirror, the universe is the reflexion, and man
Is the personality concealed in it like the eye in the

* Jāmi.

reflexion.

Thou art the eye of the reflexion, while He [God] is the light of the eye;

By means of that eye the Eye of God beholds itself.

The world is a man, and man is a world.

No clearer explanation than this is possible:

When thou lookest well to the root of the matter
He is both the Seer and the Eye and the Vision.*

And then listen how in the 13th century Sūfism taught the truth of evolution which Darwin (taught) Christendom in the 19th:

I died from the mineral, and became a plant.
I died from the plant, and reappeared in an animal.
I died from the animal and became a man.
Wherefore then should I fear? When did I grow less by dying?
Next time I shall die from the man,
That I may grow the wings of the angel.
From the angel, too, must I seek advance, "all things shall perish save His Face".
Once more shall I wing my way above the angels;
I shall become that which entereth not the imagination.
Then let me become naught, naught; for the harp-string
Cryeth unto me: "Verily, unto Him shall we return."†

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* *Gulshan-i-Ras*

† The *Mesnavi* a compilation of the sayings of the Dervish Jelāl.

Sūfism, according to the *Awarifu-d-ma'ārif* † teaches how the Path is to be trodden. This is divided into three stages: Shari'at, the Law; Tarīkat, the Way; Hakikat, The Truth. These are thus illustrated: A man asked a Shaikh—spiritual teacher—what were the three stages. He answered: "Go and strike each of the three men you see sitting there." He went and struck the first; the man leapt to his feet and returned the blow. He struck the second; the man flushed up, made a motion to rise, clenched his fists, but restrained himself. He struck the third; the man took no notice. "The first," said the Shaikh, "is in the Law; the second in the Way; the third in the Truth."

The Prophet Muhammad is, of course, recognised as the supreme authority, but to tread the Path a Shaikh is necessary, and the Murid, the disciple, must show him the most absolute devotion and submission; he must obey him in every thing without reserve or hesitation: "If thou art bidden to drench thy prayer-carpet in wine, do it; for the Shaikh knows all that thou knowest, and more." Prolonged meditation is enjoined, and goes up the various stages up to Wajd—Samādhi—extasy. Kābi'a, a woman mentioned by Ibn Khallikān (A. D. 1211-1282), would go to the house-top at night and say: "O God! hushed is the day's noise; with his beloved is the lover. But I have thee for my Lover, and alone with Thee, I joy." Only God contents the

† A book written in the 13th century by Shaikh Shahābu-d-Dīn, Companion in Sūfism to the *Dīvan-i-Khwāja Hāfiz*. Translated by Lieutenant-Colonel H. Wilberforce Clarke.

Sūfī; the dervishes say: "Neither fear we hell, nor desire we heaven." Asceticism of the most severe kind is enjoined, fasts lasting many days, and other austerities. But they are the most liberal of men: "The ways unto God are as the number of the breaths of the sons of men." But I have no time to linger further on this fascinating topic.

That is the mysticism of Islām, and Oh! that Islām may again embrace it within its pale, as it does not embrace it to-day. When Islām thus recompletes itself, it will be ready to link itself in brotherly love with other creeds. For the blessed union between the faiths of the world does not lie in the exoteric side, where forms are different and ceremonies are varied, and each suits the idiosyncracies of its people, and speaks to God in its own tongue. The union of religions lies in the spiritual truth, lies in the philosophic ideas, and lies above all in the mysticism whereby man knows himself as God, and seeks to return to Him whence he came.

My brothers, most of you here are Hinḍūs; you are not of the faith of Islām; that matters not. You say, सोऽहम्; तत्त्वमसि; the Sūfī says: An-al-haq; Ḥaq-tu-i; I am God; Thou art God. How then are ye different, when God is One? Try to understand it and you will love it; try to see all that is noble in it and you will join hands with seventy millions of Musulmāns in India; they are part of the Indian nation; without them we cannot be a people; then let us learn to love and not to hate; let us learn to understand and not to criticise; let us love our own faith above

all, but respect the belief of our neighbors. Muhammad, Christ, Zarathushtra, Moses, the Ṛṣhis and the Bodhisaṭṭvas stand in one mighty Lodge, Guardians of humanity and of nations; They know no difference between each other, and we, the humblest of Their followers, Their children, let us catch one gleam of Their all-embracing love. Only by love can They come to us; Muhammad cannot come to His own, as He is longing to do, until they throw away their bigotry, their narrowness, and love all men as He loves them all; He is yours, O Muslims, but He is ours as well; we claim every Prophet that God has given to men; we love Them all; we revere Them all; we bow ever before Them all in lowliest reverence. May the God of all nations grant that we, His children, shall no longer struggle in His name, whether we call Him Mahādeva, Viṣhṇu, Allah, Ahuramazda, Jehovah or Father—whatever name our baby lips may lisp, there is one God, there is none other, and we all worship Him.

JAINISM.

BROTHERS: we shall find ourselves this morning in a very different atmosphere from that in which we were yesterday, and in which we shall be to-morrow. We shall not now have round us the atmosphere of romance, of chivalry, that we find both in the faith of Islām and in that of the Sikhs. On the contrary we shall be in a calm, philosophic, quiet atmosphere. We shall find ourselves considering the problems of human existence looked at with the eye of the philosopher, of the metaphysician, and on the other hand the question of conduct will take up a large part of our thought; how man should live: what is his relation to the lower creatures around him; how he should so guide his life, his actions, that he may not injure, that he may not destroy. One might almost sum up the atmosphere of Jainism in one phrase, that we find in the *Sūṭra Kṛitānga*,* that man by injuring no living creature reaches the Nirvāṇa which is peace. That is a phrase that seems to carry with it the whole thought of the Jaina: peace—peace between man and man, peace between man and animal, peace everywhere and in all things, a perfect brotherhood of all that lives. Such is the ideal of the Jaina,

* iii., 20.

such is the thought that he endeavors to realise upon earth.

Now the Jainas are comparatively a small body; they only number between one and two million men; a community powerful not by its numbers, but by its purity of life, and also by the wealth of its members—merchants and traders for the most part. The four castes of the Hindūs are recognised by the Jainas, but you will now find few Brāhmaṇas among them; few also of the Kṣhaṭṭriyas, which caste seems wholly incompatible with the present ideas of the Jainas, though their Jīnas are all Kṣhaṭṭriyas. The vast mass of them are Vaishyas—traders, merchants and manufacturers, and we find them mostly gathered in Rājapuṭāna, in Guzerāṭ, in Kāṭhiawar; scattered indeed also in other parts, but the great Jaina communities may be said to be confined to these regions of India. Truly it was not so in the past, for we shall find presently that they spread, especially at the time of the Christian Era, as well as before it and after it, through the whole of Southern India; but if we take them as they are to-day, the provinces that I mentioned may be said practically to include the mass of the Jainas.

There is one point with regard to the castes which separates them from Hinḍūism. The Sannyāsī of the Jaina may come from any caste. He is not restricted, as in ordinary orthodox Hinḍūism, to the Brāhmaṇa caste. The Yaṭi may come from any of the castes, and of course as a rule comes from the

Vaishya, that being the enormously predominating caste among the Jainas.

And now with regard to their way of looking at the world for a moment; and then we will consider the great Being, who is spoken of in western orientalism, not by themselves, as the Founder.

They have the same enormous cycles of time that we are familiar with in Hinḍūism; and it must be remembered that both the Jaina and the Buḍḍhist are fundamentally offshoots from ancient Hinḍūism; and it would have been better had men not been so inclined to divide, and to lay stress on differences rather than similarities—if both these great offshoots had remained as Dārshanas of Hinḍūism, rather than have separated off into different, and as it were rival, faiths. For a long time among the occidental scholars, Jainism was looked on as derived from Buḍḍhism. That is now admitted to be a blunder and both alike derive from the more ancient Hinḍū faith; and in truth there are great differences between the Jaina and the Buḍḍhist, although there be also similarities, likenesses of teaching. There is however no doubt at all, if you will permit me to speak positively, that Jainism in India is far older than Buḍḍhism. The last of its great Prophets was contemporary with Shākya Muni, the Lord Buḍḍha; but he was the last of a great succession, and simply gave to Jainism its latest form. I said there were great cycles of time believed in by the Jaina as by the Hinḍū; and we find that in each vast cycle—which resembles the day and night of Brahmā—twenty-

four great Prophets come to the world, somewhat, though not entirely, of the nature of Avaṭāras. They always climb up from manhood, while, in some cases, the Hinḍū is loath to admit that an Avaṭāra is a perfected man. The Jaina has no doubt at all on this point. His twenty-four great Teachers, the Ṭīrṭhamkaras, as they are called, these are perfected men. To them he gives the many names that you will find applied in Buḍḍhism in somewhat different senses. He speaks of them as Arhaṭs, as Buḍḍhas, as Ṭaṭhāgaṭas, and so on, but above all as Jīnas; the Jīna is the conqueror, the man made perfect, who has conquered his lower nature, who has reached divinity, in whom the Jīva asserts his supreme and perfected powers: he is the Īshvara, from the Jaina point of view.

Twenty-four of these appear in each great cycle, and, if you take the *Kalpa Sūṭra* of the Jainas, you will find in that the lives of these Jīnas. The life of the only one which is given there at all fully —and the fullness is of a very limited description— is that of the twenty-fourth and last, He who was called Mahāvīra, the mighty Hero. He stands to the Jaina as the last representative of the Teachers of the world; as I said, He is contemporary with Shākya Muni, and by some He is said to be His kinsman. His life was simple, with little incident apparently, but great teachings. Coming down from loftier regions to His latest incarnation, that in which he was to obtain illumination, He at first guided his course into a Brāhmaṇa family, where, it

would seem from the account given, He had intended to take birth; but Indra, the King of the Devas, seeing the coming of the Jīna, said that it was not right that He should be born among the Brāhmaṇas, for ever the Jīna was a Kṣhaṭṭriya and in a royal house must He be born. So Indra sent one of the Devas to guide the birth of the Jīna to the family of King Siddhārtha, in which he was finally born. His birth was surrounded by those signs of joy and delight that ever herald the coming of one of the great Prophets of the race—the songs of the Devas, the music of Gandharvas, the scattering of flowers from heaven—these are ever the accompaniments of the birth of one of the Saviors of the world. And the child is born amid these rejoicings, and since, after His conception in the family the family had increased in wealth, in power, in prosperity, they named him Vardhamāna—the Increaser of the prosperity of his family. He grew up as a boy, as a youth, loving and dutiful to His parents; but ever in His heart the vow that He had taken, long lives before, to renounce all, to reach illumination, to become a Savior of the world. He waits until father and mother are dead, so that He may not grieve their hearts by the leaving; and then, taking the permission of His elder brother and the royal councillors, He goes forth surrounded by crowds of people to adopt the ascetic life. He reaches the jungle; He pulls off his robes, the royal robes and royal ornaments; He tears out his hair; He puts on the garment of the ascetic; He sends away the royal pro-

cession that followed him, and plunges alone into the jungle. There for twelve years He practises great austerities, striving to realise Himself and to realise the nothingness of all things but the Self; and in the thirteenth year illumination breaks upon Him, and the light of the Self shines forth upon Him, and the knowledge of the Supreme becomes His own. He shakes off the bonds of Aviḍyā and becomes the omniscient, the all-knowing; and then He comes forth as Teacher to the world, teaching for forty-two years of perfect life.

Of the teachings we are here told practically nothing; the names of some disciples are given; but the life, the incidents, these are all omitted. It is as though the feeling that all this is illusion, it is nothing, it is naught, had passed into the records of the Teacher, so as to make the outer teaching as nothing, the Teacher Himself as nothing. And then He dies after forty-two years of labor, at Pāpā 526 years before the birth of Christ. Not very much, you see, to say about the Lord Mahāvira; but His life and work are shown in the philosophy that He left, in that which He gave to the world, though the personality is practically ignored.

Before him, 1,200 years, we are told, was the twenty-third of the Ṭīrṭhamkaras, and then, 84,000 years before Him, the twenty-second, and so on backwards and backwards in the long scroll of time, until at last we come to the first of These, Rishabhaḍeva, the father of King Bharaṭa, who gave to India its name. There the two faiths, Jainism and

Hinḍūism, join, and the Hinḍū and the Jaina together revere the great One who, giving birth to a line of Kings, became the Ṛṣhi and the Teacher.

When we come to look at the teaching from the outside—I will take the inside presently—we find certain canonical Scriptures, as we call them, analogous to the Piṭakas of the Buḍḍhists, forty-five in number; they are the *Siḍḍhānṭa*, and they were collected by Bhaḍrabāka, and reduced to writing, between the third and fourth centuries before Christ. Before that, as was common in India, they were handed down from mouth to mouth with that wonderful accuracy of memory which has ever been characteristic of the transmission of Indian Scriptures. Three or four hundred years before the reputed birth of Christ, they were put into writing, reduced, the western world would say, to a fixed form. But we know well enough it was no more fixed than in the faithful memories of the pupils who took them from the teacher; and even now as Max Muller tells us, if every Veḍa were lost they could be textually reproduced by those who learn to repeat them. So the Scriptures, the *Siḍḍhānṭa*, remained written, collected by Bhaḍrabāka, at this period before Christ. In 54 A. D. a Council was held, the Council of Valabhi, where a recension of these Scriptures was made, under Ḍevarḍḍigamin, the Buḍḍhaghosha of the Jainas. There are forty-five books, as I said; 11 Aṅgas, 12 Upāṅgas, 10 Pakiṇṇakas, 6 Cheḍas, 4 Mūla-Sūṭras, and 2 other Sūṭras. This makes the canon of the Jaina religion, the authoritative Scripture of the

faith. There seem to have been older works than these, which have been entirely lost, which are spoken of as the Purvas, but of these, it is said, nothing is known. I do not think that that is necessarily true. The Jainas are peculiarly secretive as to their sacred books, and there are masterpieces of literature, among the sect of Digambaras, which are entirely withheld from publication; and I shall not be surprised if in the years to come many of these books, which are supposed to be entirely lost, should be brought out, when the Digambaras have learnt that, save in special cases, it is well to spread abroad truths, that men may have them. Secretiveness may be carried so far as to be a vice, beyond the bounds of discretion, beyond the bounds of wisdom.

Then outside the canonical Scriptures there is an enormous literature of Purāṇas and Itihāsas, resembling very much the Purāṇas and Itihāsas of the Hindūs. They are said, I know not whether truly or not, to be more systematised than the Hindū versions; what is clear is that in many of the stories there are variations, and it would be an interesting task to compare these side by side, and to trace out these variations, and to try and find the reasons that have caused them.

So much for what we may call their special literature; but when we have run over that, we find that we are still faced by a vast mass of books, which, although originating in the Jaina community, have become the common property of all India—gram-

mars, lexicons, books on rhetoric and on medicine—these are to be found in immense numbers and have been adopted wholesale in India. The well known *Amarakosha,* for instance, is a Jaina work that every student of Samskṛt learns from beginning to end.

I said the Jainas came to Southern India—spreading downwards through the whole of the southern part of the peninsula; we find them giving Kings to Madura, to Trichinopoly and to many another city in Southern India. We find not only that they thus give rulers; but we find they are the founders of Tamil literature. The Tamil grammar, said to be the most scientific grammar that exists, is a Jaina production. The popular grammar, *Namāl,* by Pavanandi, is Jaina, as is *Nāladiyar.* The famous poet Tiruvalluvar's *Kural,* known I suppose to every Southerner, is said to be a Jaina work, for this reason, that the terms he uses are Jaina terms. He speaks of the Arhaṭs; he uses the technical terms of the Jaina religion, and so he is regarded as belonging to the Jaina faith.

The same is true of the Canarese literature; and it is said that from the first century of the Christian Era to the twelfth, the whole literature of Canara is dominated by the Jainas. So great then were they in those days.

Then there came a great movement throughout Southern India, in which the followers of Mahādeva, Shiva, came preaching and singing through the country, appealing to that deep emotion of the human heart, bhakṭi, which the Jaina had too much

ignored. Singing stōṭras to Mahāḍeva they came, chanting His praises, especially working cures of diseases in His name, and before these wonderful cures and the rush of the devotion which was aroused by their singing and preaching, many of the Jainas were themselves converted; the remainder of them were driven away, so that in Southern India they became practically non-existent. Such is their story in the South; such the fashion of their vanishing.

In Rājpuṭāna, however, they remained, and so highly were they respected that Akbar, the magnanimous Musulmān Emperor, issued an edict that no animals should be killed in the neighbourhood of Jaina temples.

The Jaina are divided, we may add, into two great sects—the Ḍigambaras, known in the 4th century B. C., and mentioned in one of Ashoka's edicts; the Sveṭambaras, apparently more modern. The latter are now by far the more numerous, but it is said that the Ḍigambaras possess far vaster libraries of ancient literature than does the rival sect.

Leave that historical side; let us now turn to their philosophic teaching. They assert two fundamental existences, the root, the origin, of all that is, of Samsāra; these are uncreated, eternal. One is Jīva or āṭmā, pure consciousness, knowledge, the Knower, and when the Jīva has transcended Aviḍyā, ignorance, then he realises himself as the pure knowledge that he is by nature, and is manifested as the Knower of all that is. On the other hand Ḍravya, substance, that which is knowable; the knower and the knowable

opposed one to the other, Jīva and Ḍravya. But Ḍravya is to be thought of as always connected with Guṇa, quality. Familiar enough, of course, are all these ideas to you, but we must follow them one by one. With Ḍravya is not only Guṇa quality, but Paryāya, modification.

"Substance is the substrate of qualities; the qualities are inherent in one substance; but the characteristic of developments is that they inhere in either.

Ḍharma, Aḍharma, space, time, matter and souls (are the six kinds of substances); they make up this world, as has been taught by the Jīnas who possess the best knowledge."*

Here you have the basis of all Samsāra; the Knower and the Knowable, Jīva and Ḍravya with its qualities and its modifications. This makes up all. Out of these principles many deductions, into which we have not the time to go; I may give you, perhaps, one, taken from a Gāthā of Kundāchārya, which will show you a line of thought not unfamiliar to the Hindū. Of everything, they say, you can declare that it is, that it is not, that it is and is not. I take their own example, the familiar jar. If you think of the jar as paryāya, modification, then before that jar is produced, you will say: "Syānnāsṭi;" it is not. But if you think of it as substance, as Ḍravya, then it is always existing, and you will say of it: "Syādasṭi," it is; but you can say of it as Ḍravya and Paryāya, it is not and it is, and sum up the whole of it in a single phrase: "Syād

* *Uṭṭaraḍhyayana*, xxviii, 6, 7. Translated from the Prakṛṭ, by Hermann Jacobi.

asti nāsti; it is and it is not.* Familiar line of reasoning enough. We can find dozens, scores and hundreds of illustrations of this way of looking at the universe, wearisome, perhaps, to the ordinary man, but illuminative and necessary to the metaphysician and the philosopher.

Then we come to the growth, or rather the unfolding, of the Jīva. The Jīva evolves, it is taught, by re-incarnation and by karma; still, as you see, we are on very familiar ground. "The universe is peopled by manifold creatures who are in this Samsāra, born in different families and castes for having done various actions. Sometimes they go to the worlds of the Gods, sometimes to the hells, sometimes they become Asurās, in accordance with their actions. Thus living beings of sinful actions who are born again and again in ever-recurring births, are not disgusted with Samsāra."† And it teaches exactly as you read in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* that the human being goes downwards by evil action; by mixed good and evil he will be born as a man; or, if purified, will be born as a Ḍeva. Exactly on these lines the Jaina teaches. It is by many births, by innumerable experiences, the Jīva begins to liberate himself from the bonds of action. We are told that there are three jewels, like the three ratnas that we so often hear of among the Buḍḍhists; and these are said to be right knowledge, right faith, right conduct, a fourth

* *Report on the search for Samskṛt MSS.* by Dr. Bhandarkar, p. 95.

† *Uttarajjhayana* iii, 2, 3, 5.

being added for ascetics: "Learn the true road leading to final deliverance, which the Jīnas have taught; it depends on four causes, and is characterised by right knowledge and faith. I. Right knowledge; II. Faith; III. Conduct; IV. Austerities. This is the road taught by the Jīnas who possess the best knowledge."* By right knowledge and right faith and right conduct the Jīva evolves, and in the later stages, to these are added austerities, by which he finally frees himself from the bonds of rebirth. Right knowledge is defined as being that which I have just said to you with regard to Samsāra; and the difference of Jīva and Ḍravya, and the six kinds of substances, ḍharma, aḍharma, space, time, matter, soul; he must also know the nine truths: Jīva, soul; ajīva, the inanimate things; banḍha, the binding of the soul by karma; puṇya, merit; pāpa, demerit; āsrava, that which causes the soul to be affected by sins; samvara, the prevention of āsrava by watchfulness: the annihilation of karma; final deliverance; these are the nine truths.†

Then we find a definition as to right conduct. Right conduct, which is Sarāga, with desire, leads to Svarga—or it leads to becoming a Ḍeva, or it leads to the sovereignty of the Ḍevas, Asuras and men, but not to liberation. But the right conduct which is Vīṭarāga, free from desire, that, and that alone, will lead to final liberation. As we still follow the course of the Jīva, we find him throwing aside Moha,

* *Ibid*, xxviii, 1, 2.
† *Ibid*, 14.

delusion, Rāga, desire, Ḍvesha, hatred, and of course their opposites, for the one cannot be thrown off without the other; until at last he becomes the Jīva complete and perfect, purified from all evil, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, the whole universe reflected in himself as in a mirror, pure consciousness, "with the powers of the senses, though without the senses;" pure consciousness, the knower, the Supreme.

Such then is a brief outline of the views, the philosophic views, of the Jainas, acceptable surely to every Hinḍū, for on almost every point you will find practically the same idea, though put sometimes in a somewhat different form.

Let us look more closely at right conduct, for here the Jaina practice becomes specially interesting; and wise are many of his ways, in dealing especially with the life of the layman. Jainas are divided into two great bodies: the layman, who is called a Shrāvaka, and the ascetic, the Yaṭi. These have different rules of conduct in this sense only, that the Yaṭi carries to perfection that for which the layman is only preparing himself in future births. The five vows of the Yaṭi, which I will deal with in a moment, are also binding on the layman to a limited extent. To take a single instance: the vow of Brahmachārya, that on the Yaṭi imposes of course absolute celibacy, in the layman means only temperance and proper chastity in the life of a Gṛhasṭha. In this way the vows, we may say, run side by side, of ahimsa, harmlessness, sūnriṭi, truthfulness, asṭeya, not taking that which

is not one's own, uprightness, honesty, Brahmachārya, and finally aparigraha, not grasping at anything, absence of greed—in the case of the layman meaning that he is not to be covetous, or full of desire; in the case of the Yaṭi meaning of course that he renounces everything and knows nothing as "mine," "my own". These five vows, then, rule the life of the Jaina. Very, very marked is his translation of the word ahimsa, harmlessness: "thou shalt not kill". So far does he carry it in his life, to such an extreme, that it passes sometimes almost beyond the bounds of virtue; passes, a harsh critic might say, into absurdity; but I am not willing so to say, but rather to see in it the protest against the carelessness of animal life and animal suffering, which is but too widely spread among men; a protest, I admit, carried to excess, all sense of proportion being lost, the life of the insect, the gnat, sometimes being treated as though it were higher than the life of a human being. But still, perhaps, that may be pardoned, when we think of the extremes of the cruelty to which so many permit themselves to go; and although a smile may sometimes come when we hear of breathing only through a cloth, as the Yaṭi does, as he breathes continually touching the lips that nothing living may go into the lungs; straining all water and most unscientifically boiling it—which really kills creatures, which if water remained unboiled would remain alive—the smile will be a loving one, for the tenderness is beautiful. Listen for

a moment to what was said by a Jīna, and would to God that all men would take it as a rule of life: "The venerable One has declared .... As is my pain when I am knocked or struck with a stick, bow, fist, clod, or potsherd; or menaced, beaten, burned, tormented, or deprived of life; and as I feel every pain and agony, from death down to the pulling out of a hair; in the same way, be sure of this, all kinds of beings feel the same pain and agony, etc., as I, when living they are ill-treated in the same way. For this reason all sorts of living beings should not be beaten, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor deprived of life. I say the Arhaṭs and Bhāgavāṭs of the past, present and future, all say thus, speak thus, declare thus, explain thus; all sorts of living beings should not be slain, nor treated with violence, nor abused, nor tormented, nor driven away. This constant, permanent, eternal, true law has been taught by wise men who comprehend all things."*

If that were the rule for every one, how different would India be; no beaten and abused animal; no struggling, suffering creature; and for my part, I can look almost with sympathy even on the Jaina exaggeration, that has a basis so noble, so compassionate; and I would that the feeling of love, though not the exaggeration, should rule in all Indian hearts of every faith to-day.

Then we have the strict rule that no intoxicating drug or drink may be touched; nothing like bhang, opium, alcohol; of course nothing of

* *Uttaradhyayana*, Bk. II, i, 48,49.

this kind is allowed; even so far as honey and butter does the law of forbidden food go, because in the gaining of honey the lives of bees are too often sacrificed, and so on. Then we find in the daily life of the Jaina rules laid down for the layman as to how he is to begin and end every day:

"He must rise very very early in the morning and then he must repeat silently his mantras, counting its repetition on his fingers; and then he has to say to himself, what am I, who is my Ishtadeva, who is my Gurudeva, what is my religion, what should I do, what should I not do?" This is the beginning of each day, the reckoning up of life as it were; careful, self-conscious recognition of life. Then he is to think of the Tirthamkaras, and then he is to make certain vows. Now these vows are peculiar, as far as I know, peculiar to the Jainas, and they have an object which is praiseworthy and most useful. A man at his own discretion makes some small vow on a thing absolutely unimportant. He will say in the morning: "During this day"—I will take an extreme case given to me by a Jaina—"during this day I will not sit down more than a certain number of times;" or he will say: "For a week I will not eat such and such a vegetable;" or he will say: "For a week, or ten days, or a month, I will keep an hour's silence during the day." You may say: Why? In order that the man may always be self-conscious, and never lose his control over the body. That is the reason that was given me by my Jaina friend, and I thought it an extremely sensible one. From young boyhood a boy is

taught to make such promises, and the result is that it checks thoughtlessness, it checks excitement, it checks that continual carelessness, which is one of the great banes of human life. A boy thus educated is not careless. He always thinks before he speaks or acts; his body is taught to follow the mind and not to go before the mind, as it does too often. How often do people say: "If I had thought, I would not have done it; if I had considered, I would never have acted thus; if I had thought for a moment that foolish word would not have been spoken, and that harsh speech would never have been uttered, that discourteous action would never have been done." If you train yourself from childhood never to speak without thinking, never to act without thinking, see how unconsciously the body would learn to follow the mind, and without struggle and effort, carelessness would be destroyed. Of course there are far more serious vows than these taken by the layman as to fasting, strict and severe, every detail carefully laid down in the rules, in the books. But I was telling you a point that you would not so readily find in the books, so far as I know and that seemed to me to be characteristic and useful. Let me add that when you meet Jainas you will find them, as a rule, what you might expect from this training—quiet, self-controlled, dignified, rather silent, rather reserved.*

Pass from the layman to the ascetic, the Yaṭi. Their rules are very strict. Much of fasting, carried

* The details here given are mostly from the *Jaina-tattvā-darsha*, by Muni Almārāmji, and were translated from the Prakṛt for me by my friend Govinda Dāsa.

to an extraordinary extent, just like the fasting of the great ascetics of the Hindū. There are both men and women ascetics among the sect known as the Sveṭāmbarās; among the Ḍigambaras there are no female ascetics and their views of women are perhaps not on the whole very complimentary. Among the Sveṭāmbarās, however, there are female ascetics as well as male, under the same strict rules of begging, of renouncing of property; but one very wise rule is that the ascetic must not renounce things without which progress cannot be made. Therefore he must not renounce the body; he must beg food enough to support it, because only in the human body can he gain liberation. He must not renounce the Guru, because without the teaching of the Guru he cannot tread the narrow razor path; nor discipline, for if he renounce that, progress would be impossible; nor the study of the Sūṭras, for that also is needed for his evolution; but outside these four things—the body, the Guru, discipline, study—there must be nothing of which he can say: "it is mine". Says a teacher: "He should not speak unasked, and asked he should not tell a lie; he should not give way to his anger, and should bear with indifference pleasant and unpleasant occurrences. Subdue your self, for the self is difficult to subdue; if your self is subdued, you will be happy in this world and in the next." *

The female ascetics, living under the same strict rule of conduct, have one duty which it seems to me is of the very wisest provision; it is the duty of

* *Uttaraḍhyayana*, i. 14, 15.

female ascetics to visit all the Jaina households, and to see that the Jaina women, the wives and the daughters, are properly educated, properly instructed. They lay great stress on the education of the women, and one great work of the female ascetic is to give that education and to see that it is carried out. There is a point that I think the Hinḍū might well borrow from the Jaina, so that the Hinḍū women might be taught without the chance of losing their ancestral faith, or suffering interference with their own religion, taught by ascetics of their own creed. Surely no vocation can be nobler, surely it would be an advantage to Hinḍūism.

And then how is the ascetic to die? By starvation. He is not to wait until death touches him; but when he has reached that point where in that body he can make no further progress, when he has reached that limit of the body, he is to put it aside and pass out of the world by death by voluntary starvation.

Such is a brief and most imperfect account of a noble religion, of a great faith which is practically, we may say, on almost all points, at one with the Hinḍū; and so much is this the case that in Northern India the Jaina and the Hinḍū Vaishyas intermarry and interdine. They do not regard themselves as of different religions, and in the Hinḍū College we have Jaina students, Jaina boarders, who live with their Hinḍū brothers, and are thus from the time of childhood helping to draw closer and closer together the bonds of love and of brotherhood. I spoke to you yesterday about nation building, and reminded you

that here in India we must build our nation out of the men of many faiths. With the Jainas no difficulty can well arise, save by the bigotry that we find alike among the less instructed of every creed, which it is the duty of the wiser, the more thoughtful, the more religious, the more spiritual, to gradually lessen. Let every man in his own faith teach the ignorant to love and not to hate. Let him lay stress on the points that unite us, and not on the points that separate us. Let every man in his daily life speak never a word of harshness for any faith, but words of love to all. For in thus doing we are not only serving God, but also serving man; we are not only serving religion, we are also serving India, the common Motherland of all; all are Indians, all are children of India, all must have their places in the Indian nation of the future. Then let us, my brothers, strive to do our part in the building, if it be but by bringing one small brick of love to the mighty edifice of brotherhood; and let no man who takes the name of a Theosophist, a lover of the Divine Wisdom, ever dare to say one word of harshness as regards one faith that God has given to man, for they all come from Him, to Him they all return, and what have we to do with quarreling by the way?

SIKHISM.

BROTHERS: In dealing with Sikhism we are in face of what may be called a double movement. Fundamentally religious in its beginnings, it was forced by the pressure of circumstances into a militant organisation. Most people in thinking of the Ṣikh think of a gallant warrior, of a splendid fighter. But we shall err very seriously if we look on him, we, who are students of religion, as only, or even fundamentally, a fighter. That came by the pressure of circumstances, by the pressure of his environment; but the movement itself, in its lasting character, is fundamentally a religious movement. It is a movement which grew up in the midst of Hinḍūism, having in the mind of its great founder, Guru Nānak, the idea of joining together the Hinḍūs and the Musulmāns in one league of love to God and service to man. The thought of Guru Nānak—as we find it expressed not only in his words, but far more in his life—was to join together these warring elements of the Indian people on a platform that both could accept.

That platform is fundamentally love to God, Bhakṭi, devotion—Bhakṭi to God and also to the Guru, the Teacher, for the very name Sikh comes from the word Shishya, disciple, and this idea of love to God and to the Teacher is the very basis and the very root of Sikhism. It is a movement,

then, primarily of devotion. In its philosophy it is Hinḍū, but as a movement it is reformatory in its nature, striving against the formalism of the time, against the ceremonialism of the time, in order to find the life which lay below the form, the essence of the truth that had inspired the ceremonies. In the time of Guru Nānak, as too often in the history of the world, a great religion had grown more and more formal and men were starving on the husk of the grain rather than eating the grain itself. Guru Nānak sought to find the grain, and in so doing threw aside, to a large extent, the husk; he strove to lead men to see the reality of religion, the life of religion, the essence of religion, and to see that life and essence in love to God and the Guru, in love to men as children of the one God. You may almost sum up in that phrase the very essence of Sikhism. We shall find presently in his life how he tried to draw together the warring elements around him. We shall see presently in his life how it was one song of praise and love to God, how he was ever seeking the Supreme and, having found Him, strove to teach his fellows how they too, by devotion, might reach the same knowledge. That is the thought that I would have in your minds in the study of Sikhism, and I shall show you presently how that is carried out by the teachings in the Sikh Scriptures.

But before I do that, and before I speak of the life of the great saint, I must hastily sketch for you, as it were, the historic setting of Sikhism, so that

you may understand how it came to pass that from a movement essentially of Bhakṭi, it became identified with the most gallant military spirit. And in doing this, I cannot, of course, give all the details that you may read for yourselves. But there is ever the difficulty in the minds of most that they lay too much stress on details in their study and lose sight of the broad outlines that alone render the whole intelligible. Professor Huxley used to complain of students of science that they lost sight of the forest in studying the trees, and that is continually true. Men lose themselves in a maze of details, and they fail to grasp the unifying principles in history, and to see the main trend and current and meaning of events. Now all that I want to do, as regards the history of the Sikhs, is to give you a broad outline which will make you understand how it came to be what it was. Ten Gurus, one after the other, in unbroken sucession, Guru Nānak the first, the purest, the saintliest and the noblest of all, the life, the heart and soul of his followers. We will take his life presently (A. D. 1469-1539); for the moment I but name him. Followed by the second, Guru Angaḍ (1539-1552), of whom there is little to be said, save that he gathered together many of the songs and the teachings of his predecessor and so began the compilation of the Sikh scriptures, the *Ādi Granṭha Sāhab*. Then the third, Guru Amār Ḍās (1552-1574), of whom one point is specially noticeable—that he met in conference the Musulmān Emperor, Akbar, on

matters of religion; showing how the spirit of Guru Nānak was ruling, and the attempt was being carried on to bring about peace between the great rival faiths of Hinḍūism and Islām. Then the next Guru, the fourth, Guru Rām Ḍās (1574-1581), still on terms of friendship with the liberal-minded and magnanimous Akbar, who gives him a piece of land at Amriṭsar, where he digs out the famous tank. Then the fifth, Guru Arjunmal (1581-1606), the builder of the famous Golden Temple, marks a point in the history of the Sikhs; for this building gives them a centre, a home, a rallying place. The temple is first dedicated to Hari, Hari Manḍir it was called, for Guru Nānak ever taught that in the name of Hari lay salvation. Later it became the Darbār Sāhab. Now the Sikhs have got, as it were, their own place. They begin to gather round the temple; they begin to form a definite community. Arjunmal, the religious teacher, becomes the head of the definitely organised religious community gathered at a special spot—the beginning of the Sikh State. His great work, again, is to gather together the teachings of his predecessors, and it is he who definitely compiles and who gives out the *Ādi Granṭha Sāhab;* composed partly of the songs and the teachings of the preceding Gurus, partly also from the songs of the saints in the Sikh movement, and so on.

Now comes the first touch which tells of the future struggle. Jehangir is on the throne of Akbar, less liberal, less magnanimous than his predecessor. His son rebels against him. Guru Arjunmal,

apparently without any reason, or for a reason which really was no reason at all, was accused of sympathising with the rebel son. I say "no reason," because the root of the accusation appears to have lain in the anger and the jealousy of the powerful minister to whom he had refused his child in marriage; and this minister, stirring up the suspicions of Jehangir against him, induces the Emperor to seize the Guru and imprison him. He dies from the hardships of the imprisonment.

There is the point where the community, which was purely religious and peaceful, begins to be led by this aggression on its teacher and its ruler, into the path that will make it a great military body. Jehangir is followed by Aurangzīb, and things grow worse and worse under that fanatical ruler. The succeeding Guru, the sixth, Guru Har Govinḍ (1606-1645) begins definitely in self-defence to organise the Sikhs; he binds them into a body apart alike from Hinḍū and Musulmān, no longer a body to join the two, but a body apart and separate from both. The State of the Sikh is beginning to grow up, and now commence warfare and struggle, scattered skirmishing, scattered fighting, a sharing in the fights around them, ever welding the Sikhs more and more together as a fighting body. The seventh Guru, Guru Har Rai (1645-1661), of whom little is said, is quiet and peaceful, but around are more struggles, still increasing war, increasing strife, increasing military spirit, until the religious side, as it were, almost goes into the background, save

for the inspiration and the binding force it gives. Then comes a Guru, Guru Har Kishan (1661-1664), who is but a child, a child of six years dying when he is nine years old, to be followed by the ninth Guru, Guru Ṭegh Bahādur (1664-1675). His life is very troubled, and he is cruelly murdered by Aurangzīb, and is succeeded by his son, the last, the tenth Guru, Guru Govinḍ (1675-1708), who gives to the Sikhs their great military organisation, and makes them into the body that raised, under Ranjiṭ Singh, the Sikh Empire in the Panjab.

On this tenth Guru we must pause for a while. A mere boy, he flies for his life after his father's murder, and for some twenty years he remains in retirement, thinking out his mission. Naturally he broods over his father's murder, naturally he is bitter against his father's enemies; the hatred of the Musulmān seems to become almost a duty for the son, for the Guru, and therefore for the Sikh. The old friendship has vanished; the blood of a father lies between the Guru and the Musulmān Emperor. For some twenty years, as I say, he remains in retirement, thinking over the work that lies before him, thinking over his work as a religious teacher, but still more as a military organiser. And, at last, he comes out from his retirement ready to do a mighty work, prepared for his life's mission. He is determined definitely to separate off the Sikhs from all possibility of confusion with men of any other faith. Five devoted disciples he calls around him, and with these five men and himself in the midst,

he institutes the ceremony of Pahul, initiation, simple, warrior-like. He takes water; his wife happens to be passing with five kinds of sweetmeats, and he takes of the five sweetmeats, a little of each, and throws them into water. He stirs the water with a two-edged knife; he sprinkles it on the five men around him, and gives to each of them to drink, and they in turn sprinkle him and give him to drink, and he proclaims them as the Khālsā, the pure, and bids them add to their names the epithet of Singh, the Lion. These are the first initiated disciples, marked out from all others by special signs that every Sikh must carry on his person. The long hair, dividing him from the shaven Hinḍū; the comb; the two-edged dagger or knife; the steel bangle; the short breeches, coming to the knee. These are are the five marks—the five K's as they are called, because each begins with a K in the vernacular—whereby he separates every Sikh from all surrounding him, and which the true Sikhs bear to-day. That is the ceremony which he lays down as the ceremony of initiation, and wherever five Sikhs are gathered together, there, he said, would be his spirit, and there the power of initiation. He is to be the last of the Gurus; after him no other teacher is to come; the power is to go into the hands of the Khālsā to be exercised by the council of its chiefs, the Gurū Māṭā; the authority for the Sikhs lies in the sacred book which, later, Guru Govinḍ completes.

Now he is the warrior chief and the Sikhs flock

around his standard. He fights, he struggles, he builds up a great army; his men are known by their marvellous courage, by the way they face great odds in battle; the same passion that we saw animating the Musulmān in his conquering career after his great Prophet is seen also in the warrior Sikh, and they died as joyfully as other men lived. No wonder that at first they carried all before them; yet, after much struggling, being but a few, after all, amid myriads, we find them beaten back in the struggle that they undertook with such heroism against overwhelming numbers, for these few had set themselves against the mighty Musulmān Empire in the north. They are but a few against myriads, but they are never discouraged, never terrified, never disheartened; their Guru is with them wherever they go, and where he is they are confident—he is beaten back, back, back, until at last, by a splendid effort, he turns and drives off the troops of the enemy; they pursue him no further. The Well of Salvation the place is called, where that saving battle was fought.

It is after this, to encourage his followers, that he gives out the last of the Sikh Scriptures, the *Book of the Tenth King*, or Guru, *Ḍashwen Pāḍshāhī*, the completion of the *Āḍi Granṭha Sāhab*.

Then comes the end. He is attacked by a Paṭhān, who quarrels with him over a matter of trade, a mere trifle, but the man threatens his life, and the warrior Guru strikes him down. He is dead. The sons of this man come, and he addresses them

with kindness and favor; remembering the murder of his own father, he pities the sons whom he has made fatherless; he takes them into service and confidence, and when he knows that his time is come, there is a strange scene. He speaks to one of these sons about the duty of revenge, about the slaying of the slayer of the kinsman, until at last he provokes him to strike him his own death-blow; he saves the young man from the anger of his followers, saying that he has but avenged his father's blood, and he must go free. He bids them follow the Scripture, bids them be faithful to the Khālsā, and dies.

Then, after he is gone, there is no more the Teacher; but, as I said, the real authority is the *Ādi Granṭha Sāhab*, with the council of chiefs, and the Khālsā, the whole community of the Sikhs, wherein there was to be no difference of caste, no difference between man and man, all were to be brothers and were to be equal.

Then a brilliant story of military struggle and military success, crowned at last by the splendid victories of Ranjiṭ Singh, the Lion of the Panjab (1797), who makes the Panjab practically the Sikh Empire. He dies in 1839. And then, ah! then, the saddest history of treachery, of betrayal, of brave warrior-souled and gallant men deceived and sold, struggling on desperately against all. The saddest of all stories, but the story of India over and over again, where brother has sold brother, where friend has sold friend, where Indian has betrayed

Indian—that was all repeated in this story of the fall of the Sikh Empire. Never a story more heroic, never a story more pathetic, brave men struggling against overwhelming odds, so that even their own heroism could not save them, until the Empire broke entirely and the Panjab passed into the hands of the British troops in 1849. That is the outside setting.

Let us pass from that; let us see what was the faith, what the life, that gave to Sikhism its binding power, its marvellous heroism, its splendid strength. It is the life and the teaching of Guru Nānak, the sweetest of characters, and the saintliest of men.

From childhood a boy marked out, as all God's Prophets are marked out, as different from his fellowmen. The story of his childhood is not eventful, but it is very pathetic and very quaint. Quaint in this way, that he was born into a family of good people, of the commonest quality, like an eagle in the nest of a sparrow, and the sparrows did not understand the eagle, and they could not make out what manner of creature this was. Quiet, reserved, silent, wandering away to meditate when other boys would be at play; what strange child is this, who will not learn as other boys learn, who will not play as other boys play, who when he goes to his teacher wants to know the mystic meaning of the letters, and angers the Paṇdiṭ by asking questions that the Paṇdiṭ—good man—cannot answer? always coming athwart his surroundings because he must know what is within,

he cannot be satisfied with what is without. And there is nothing more troublesome to the commonplace man or woman than to be pressed with questions as to realities, when he finds himself quite comfortable on the safe cushions of formulæ; and so Nānak in his childhood, is a great trial to his father. Surely he must be mad; he is sitting for hours meditating and taking no food; he must be having fever. They bring a doctor to see him. Nānak asks the doctor whether he could cure the diseases of his soul. What kind of patient is this who greets his physician in that manner? Or take him when the ceremony of the sacred thread is to be performed. The story is so characteristic that I will give it to you, and I ought to say here that for all the quotations I am making, I am depending upon my Sikh friends, who have been good enough to translate them for me from their own books, so that I may have ground to go on which is sure.

"When everything was ready and the Purohiṭ (the family priest) was about to invest him with it, Nānak turned round and enquired: 'Tell me, Paṇdiṭ-ji, of what use is this thread? What are the duties of the man who is invested with it? Why is it necessary to put it on?'

"'Nobody can perform any sacrificial ceremonies without putting it on,' said the Purohiṭ, who was merely a village Paṇdiṭ, and did not know the secret signification of the sacred thread; 'this thread purifies the wearer and entitles him to attend and perform all ceremonies.'

"'If a man who has put on this sacred thread,' said Nānak, 'does not change his ways, and leads an impure life, does this thread purify him and help him in any way in the end? Does not he reap the fruit of his actions?'

"'I do not know,' replied the Purohiṭ, 'but it is ordained in the Shāstras, and we must follow our forefathers.'

"'From the cotton of compassion spin out the thread of love; make the knots of abstinence and truth; let your mind put on this thread; it is not broken, nor soiled, nor burned, nor lost. Praised be they who have put this on,' said Nānak.

"'You have spoken well,' said the Purohiṭ, 'but look at all the expense and trouble your father has been put to, see all these friends and relations; they will be all disappointed if you won't put this on.'

"'I am truly sorry that I cannot oblige you,' said Nānak; 'I cannot put it on, and I will advise you also to think more about the essence of things than the form. Only by true conviction one gains respect, and by praising God and by living truthfully man reaches perfection.'

"At last his mother entreated him for her sake not to disappoint her. Then Nānak simply said; 'Mother, I obey,' took the thread and put it on."*

There you have a very characteristic story of this youth with the marks of a Prophet upon him, ever seeking the inner truth through the outer shows.

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* Life of Guru Nānak, in *C. H. C. Magazine*, by Jogendra Singh.

He grows into youth, and is a most unsatisfactory son to the good dull father, for he will not take up agriculture, he won't have a shop, and he won't travel in commerce. His trade consists in giving money or rather food to Sannyāsīs, which his father thinks is not a good bargain, and finds little satisfactory, although Nānak thinks that it is the best bargain that can be made. What is to be done with such a young man? He sends him to his sister and her husband who love him. He takes service under a Nawāb, and serves faithfully and well; but he is ever giving away in charity, and at last wearies of the world, and determines to give up service, to give up the household-life into which he has entered, to wander seeking for God, and for the realisation of His love. There comes another characteristic scene with the Nawāb after he had left his service. The Nawāb sends for the young man, and after a time he comes. The Nawāb is angry because he has not come at once.

"'I am not now your servant, Nawāb Sāhab,' was Nānak's reply. 'Now I am a servant of God.'

"'Do you believe in one God or many Gods?' enquired the Nawab.

"'Only in one, indivisible, self-existent, incomprehensible and all-pervading adorable God do I believe,' replied Nānak.

"'Then since you believe in one God, and I too believe in one God, your God must be the same as mine; so then if you are a firm believer, come with me to the mosque and offer prayers with us.'

"'I am ready,' said Nānak.

"His father-in-law was struck dumb with amazement, and he at once left the Court believing that Nānak had embraced Islām.

"It was Friday, and as the time for prayer was at hand the Nawāb got up and, accompanied by Nānak, proceeded to the mosque. When the Kāzi began to repeat the prayer the Nawāb and his party began to go through the usual bowing ceremony, but Nānak stood silently still. When the prayer was over the Nawāb turned towards Nānak, and indignantly asked: 'Why did you not go through the usual ceremonies? You are a liar and your pretensions are false. You did not come here to stand like a log.'

"'You put your face to the earth,' observed Nānak, 'while your mind was running wild in the skies; you were thinking of getting horses from Candahār, not offering prayers; and your priest, sir, while going automatically through the bowing process, was thinking of the safety of the mare which foaled only the other day. How can I offer prayers with those who go through customary bows and repeat words like a parrot?'

"The Nawāb acknowledged that he was really thinking of getting horses and all the time he was praying the thought harassed him, but the Kāzi was greatly displeased and turning towards Nānak showered a volley of questions." *

There is the spirit of the seeker for reality coming out again. He begins his wanderings. He goes wandering about, singing with a musician and a

* *Ibid.*

friend who follow him, Marḍānā and Bālā, and he comes to a village where he needs food. There is a poor man, Lālu, a carpenter, a man of pure life, who welcomes the wandering Sannyāsī, gives him his own bed, brings him warm food, and Nānak eats. Next day a rich banker in the town gives a great feast to Brāhmaṇas, and invites Nānak to come and eat with them. Nānak goes, but he will not take the food. Says the host: "'Why don't you take my food?'

"'Because,' said Nānak, 'your food is not pure, for you have cooked this food for self-glorification; it is a ṭāmasic gift and therefore impure.'

"'You call my food impure while that of the low caste Lālu is pure? How is that?' asked Rai Bhag contemptuously.

"'You treat your guests irreverently and contemptuously,' said Nānak, 'that shows your ṭāmasic aims. I ate food cooked by Lālu, for it was cooked with love and brought with reverence, with no desire for repayment. You must learn a lesson from humble Lālu. Your food is full of blood.'

"'What proof have you that my food is impure,' demanded Rai Bhag angrily.

Nānak took Rai Bhag's food in one hand while in the other he took the food cooked by Lālu, and, as he pressed each, from Rai Bhag's food oozed out drops of blood while from that of Lālu oozed out milk."*

Such was the way in which Guru Nānak taught, the teaching ever bearing on reality and exposing show. Was he a Hinḍū? Was he a Musulmān?

* *Ibid.*

Men quarrel as to which he was, for he was above the distinctions of outer creed and he loved all men and called himself nothing. When he came to die, after seventy years of noble life and priceless teaching, his disciples disputed as to what faith he really belonged; should he be burned as a Hinḍū, or should he be buried as a Musulmān? And as they disputed, one lifted the sheet over the corpse, and the body had disappeared, and he was neither burned nor buried.

Such was the spirit of the great Teacher, as shown in his life and conduct, and in the teachings that he left behind him; they show the spirit that moved him—that profound devotion to the Supreme, that love for God that worldly men call madness, that passion and devotion that the saints in every age and in every religion have felt. Philosophically he was a Hinḍū; his specialty is this profound Bhakṭi and his hatred of sham. Let us take his teaching and the teaching of his successors, for here we can make no difference, and see how they taught, and see the spirit of the teaching. I have, here, a large number of extracts from the *Āḍi Granṭha Sāhab*, classified under certain headings on which I had asked for specific Sikh teaching, so as to be able to give you an authoritative outline of that teaching, and I take passages from these Sikh translations, to show you exactly the nature of the teachings.*

* I owe most of these to Sirḍars Umrao Singh and Harbans Singh, who selected the illustrative passages and translated them. The verification of the references may be rendered more easy by the subjoined description of the contents of the *Āḍi Granṭha Sāhab*.

First as to the Supreme. "Thou art I, I am Thou. Of what kind is the difference?" "In all the One dwells, the One is contained." "He Himself is One, and He Himself is many. He does not die nor perish. He neither comes nor goes. Nānak says that He is always contained in all."

You can catch the echo of the Upaniṣhaṭs, thrown into more popular language, the deep thought of Hinḍū philosophy, put into a form for popular use.

One Oṁkāra, true Name, Maker, Spirit, fearless, unmalevolent, timeless Form. From no womb, Self-existent, great-bliss (or through Guru's favor) (to be realised). True from before; true from before the ages (Yugas); true is and true to be, O Nānak.

[Japa I.]

Signless, that none may cross, unreachable (or unknowable); No object (for the senses); Untouched

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taken from the *History of the Sikhs*, by J. D. Cunningham, second edition, pp. 368-371.

The *Ādi Granṭha Sāhab* is divided into parts as follows:

Japji, or Guru Manṭra, by Guru Nānak.
Sodur Reih Bās. „
Kīrit Sohila. „
31 §§ by forms of verse: with additions. „

Shri Rāga.	Todī.	Tokkāri.
Majh.	Bairārī.	Kedāra.
Gaurī.	Teilang.	Bhairo.
Assa.	Sodhī.	Basant.
Gujrī.	Bilāwal.	Sarang.
Ḍeva Ganhḍārī.	Gand.	Mulār.
Bihāgrā.	Rām Kali.	Kanrā.
Wiad Hans.	Nat Nārāyan.	Kalyān.
Sorath.	Maṭi Gaura.	Parbhāṭī
Dhanāsri.	Marū.	Jai Jaiwanṭi.
Jeit Siri.		

Bhog.
Bhog ka Barū.

by time or action; Of unborn essence; From no womb; Self-existent; Unconditioned; Unwavering; May I unto this True Verity be sacrifice. He hath no form, nor color, nor outline; by the true Word He is to be pointed out. He hath no mother, father, son, nor kindred, nor lust, nor wife, nor clan; Untinged (by Māyā); Untranscended; Higher than highest; Thou Light of all; Brahm in all vessels hid; His Light complete in every vehicle (heart). By Guru's teaching the adamant Portals throw ajar, with fearless gaze fixed firm. Having created beings, He placed over them time, (death), and kept all regulation under (His) control. By Guru's service the true wealth (they) find; by acting on (His) word freedom (they) gain. In a pure vessel (heart) only Truth may live; rare are they of conduct pure. Essence in the highest Essence merged; Nānak in Thee doth refuge find. [Sorath I.]

I bow down (or glorify) the primal One, Omkāra;
Who hath spread out (this) water, land and sky;
The first Spirit, unmanifest, imperishable;
Whose light illuminates the fourteen lokas;
Abiding in the elephant and the ant alike;
Who knoweth as equal the ruler and pauper;
From form duality; the signless Spirit
Directly knowing; the inner controller of every vessel (heart). [Guru.]

He Himself, the Formless (and) the Form; That One without qualities and with qualities; One alone

is spoken of, O Nānak. That One alone is many.

[Guru v. Bavanakhhri.]

The Parabrahman, Supreme Lord, cometh not into wombs.
With Thy word createst Thou creation, and after making Thou pervadest it.
Thy form could not be seen, how shall I meditate on Thee?
Thou functionest in all; Thy power showeth (this);
Thy love fills treasures which are inexhaustible;
These jewels (of peace, etc.), are priceless.

[Guru v. Var-Maru.]

Countless (lit. crores) Avaṭāras of Vishṇu didst Thou make.
Countless Brahmāṇdas are the abodes of Thy Law;
Countless Maheshvaras are created and absorbed;
Countless Brahmās Thou didst set to fashion the worlds;
So rich is my Lord,
Whose great qualities I cannot speak of in details;
Whom countless Māyās attend.
(The hearts of) countless beings are His resting place;
Countless are (the devotees) who embrace (lit. or draw close to) Thy limbs (personified for worship).
Countless the devotees who dwell with Hari.
Countless the Kings (lit. Lords of Umbrellas) who pay Thee homage.
Countless Indras standing at Thy portals;

Countless Heavens in Thy glance;
Countless (Thy) priceless Names;
Whose countless resonances sounded forth;
Countless tourneys of wondrous action;
Countless Shakṭis and Shivās obedient to His will;
Countless the beings whom Thou nourishest;
In whose feet are countless Ṭīrṭhas (sacred places);
Countless pure ones repeat Thy dear name
Countless worshippers render Thee worship;
Infinite Thy Expanse; there is no second;
Whose pure and spotless glories are countless;
Whose praise is sung by countless Brahmā-Ṛṣhis;
In the winking of an eye whose creations and absorptions are countless;
Countless Thy qualities that may not be numbered;
Countless wise men declare Thy knowledge;
Countless meditators meditate on Thee;
Countless ascetics perform austerities;
Countless Munīs sit in silence;
Unmanifest Lord, imperceptible Master,
Filling all hearts and controlling from within,
Wherever I look Thou dwellest there;
The Guru (or great one) illumined Nānak (with this knowledge). [Guru v. Bharon.]

Who hath no discus, mark, nor class, nor caste, nor sub-caste,
Of whom none can say: "He hath form, color, outline or vesture,"
Changeless form shining through Anubhāva (direct perception of innermost spiritual consciousness),

Whom we might call the Indra (Lord) of countless Indras, and King of kings.
Three worlds, lords of earth, Gods, men, demons and forest grass are saying, neti, neti (not this, not this).
Who can utter all Thy names? the wise declare Thy functional names (alone).

[Guru x. Jap.]

In every way I said, there was no other, O friend,
He dwells in all the continents and islands (dvīpas),
He fills all lokas.

[Guru v. Devagandhari.]

His greatness the Veda doth not know;
Brahmā knoweth not His Mystery;
Avatāras know not His Limit;
The supreme Lord, Parabrahm, is boundless.

[Guru v. Rāmkali.]

All are made liable to errors, the Maker alone does not err.

[Guru i. Shrī Rāg.]

And then for worship; every Hindū knows the Arati and the way in which light, and one thing after another, are offered to the image of the worshipped God. Guru Nānak deprecates the use of images in worship, and in his own Arati offers the whole universe in the worship of Brahman, the Supreme.

Space itself (Thy) salver; the sun and moon (Thy) lamps;
The starry host thy pearls, O Father.
The fragrant breeze of the Malaya mountains (Thy) incense:
The wind waving (its) chawri (over Thee);
All forest vegetation (lit. vegetable kingdom) as flowers, O Light!
What a rejoicing (Āraṭi or hymn of praise) O Destroyer of fear (or samsāra); the Anāhaṭ Shabda (the soundless or unstruck sound) sounds as (Thy) kettle-drum.
Thousands are Thy eyes; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thousands are Thy forms; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thousands are Thy holy feet; Nay! Nay! Thou hast none;
Thou art without nostril (lit. sense of smell) yet Thou hast a thousand nostrils;
This wondrous working of Thine bewilders (us),
In everything, O Glory! is Thy Light.
In every one the Light of That (Light) shines.
In Guru's presence (or by Guru's teaching shineth forth that Light;
That is rejoicing (Āraṭi) which to Him is pleasing.

Such is his teaching. It breathes the purest spirit of devotion, that reaches beyond all forms, to the One Formless; and now and then a heart is found that feels greater passion of devotion for the ideal of the

One than in dwelling on any of the forms in which the One manifests Himself. In Guru Nānak there is no denial of all the forms in which the Supreme is shown, but he takes the view of the Upaniṣhaṭs, that there is one Brahman, supreme over all, of whom all the Gods are but the partial manifestations, of whom the highest forms are but reflexions of the Beauty.

When we are asked what it is he teaches as to creation, we find that the pure Veḍānṭic teaching, that the creation is but Māyā and by the power of Īshvara and Māyā all things come forth.

By will (lit. order) the forms come forth.

[Guru i. Japa.]

One Mother (Māyā) united with (God) gave birth (to) three acceptable children (lit. disciples);
One of them sends forth samsāra, the other provides and the third habitually dissolves.
As it pleaseth Him so (He) directeth (them), according to (His) will.
He looketh on but is not seen; great is the marvel, Hail, to Him, Hail!
The primal, the unstained, without beginning, the indestructible, in every age (assuming) the same vesture.

[Guru i. Japa.]

When the Maker causes emanation (or expansion),
Then the creation takes up infinite bodies;
Whenever Thou drawest in,

Then all the embodied merge in Thee.

[Guru x. Chaupai.]

There are hundreds of thousands of Ākāshas and Pāṭālas.

[Guru i. Japa.]

The limits of His creation cannot be known.

[Guru i. Japa.]

This world is the house of the True (one); the True (one) dwells therein.

[Guru ii. Asavar.]

This world is the temple of Hari, but awful darkness without the Guru.

Those who are led by the mind (lit. mind facing), these blind rustics worship Him as being distinct (lit. another).

[Guru iii. Prabhaṭi.]

Here is Siḍḍhā's question:

How is the world produced O man, (and) how can pain be destroyed?

Answer of Guru Nānak:

In Egoism the world has its birth, by forgetting the name (we) suffer.

[Guru i. Saḍgoṣht.]

As to the Jīva he teaches that the Jīva is the same in essence with the Supreme, and that by reincarnation and by karma, the Jīva can realise Himself and know

that there is no difference. Endless births he speaks of, and he repeats that phrase that we find with the Jaina as with the Hiṇḍū, that human birth is difficult to gain and that in human birth is liberation to be found.

This Jīva is not subject to death.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

In the body is mind, in the mind is the True (one)
That True one merging in (uniting with) the True one is absorbed.

[Guru i. Rāg Ḍhanasari.]

The same thing is in the body which is in the Brahmāṇḍa;
Whosoever seeks finds.

[Pippa Bhakṭa Ḍhanasari.]

Neither caste nor birth is asked; enquire at the House of the True. According to one's actions are caste and birth.

[Guru i. Prahbaṭi.]

The man who performs good actions,
He is called a Ḍeva (in this) world:
He who does evil deeds in this world,
Men call him an Asura (demon).

[Guru x. Vichiṭra Nātak.]

On karma, the teaching is very clear:

Soweth himself, eateth himself.

[Guru i. Japaji.]

In the field of karma he reapeth whatever he soweth.

[Guru v. Baramah Majh.]

Let us not blame any one,
Whatever we act that we enjoy (and suffer);
Karmas (actions) are ours, bondage is ours too,
Coming and going is the activity (business) of Māyā

[Guru v.]

In many births (we) became insects and moths;
In many births (we) became elephants, fish, and deer;
In many births (we) became birds and serpents;
In many births (we) were yoked as steeds and bullocks;
Seek the Lord! It is the surer (opportunity) of seeking; after long ages this (human) body has been attained.
Many lives (have we) wandered over mountains.
Many lives (have we) been miscarried from the womb.
Many lives (have we) been created as herbage.
We have been made to wander through eighty-four lakhs of wombs.
The association of the good hath let us attain (this) birth.
Serve thou, devotedly say Hari. This is the Guru's teaching.

If he cast off vanity, falsehood and pride
And die living, then is he accepted in (that) court (*i.e.*, presence). [Guru v. Guri Rāg.]

As iron placed on an anvil is beaten into shape,
So is a deluded (or ignorant) soul thrown into wombs and made to wander, (so that) it may bend (or turn to the Right Path).
[Guru i. Suhi Rāg Kafi 4.]

Here is a beautiful description of the Jīvan-Mukṭa :
Who in his mind knows the Lord's will to be for the best,
He is verily called Jīvan-Mukṭa.
To him joy is the same as sorrow.
He is ever blissful; to him there is no separation.
Gold to him is the same as clay.
To him nectar is the same as bitter poison.
Honor and dishonor are the same to him.
The pauper and the king are equal for him.
Whatever is made to happen (by the Lord), that same (he considers) fit and proper.
O Nānak, such a man is called a Jīvan-Mukṭa.
[Guru v. Sukhmani.]

And here is a fine poem on the Brahmajñānī.
Brahmajñānī is ever unstained, like the lotus which is not wetted by water.
Brahmajñānī is ever free from fault (or evil), as the sun dries up all things ;
Brahmajñānī looks upon every one equally, as wind

touches the king and pauper alike.

Brahmajñānī suffers, endures all equally, as the earth dug by some and smeared with sandal by others.

Such is the quality of Brahmajñānī as the (burning) power of fire is innate.

Brahmajñānī is purer than the pure, as impurity touches not water.

In the mind of Brahmajñānī shines light, as the sky (shines) above earth.

To the Brahmajñānī friend and foe are equal, Brahmajñānī hath no pride

Brahmajñānī is higher than the high, but he thinks himself lower than every one.

Those men become Brahmajñānī, O Nānak, whom the Lord Himself makes (such).

Brahmajñānī is the dust (of the feet) of every one ; Brahmajñānī has gathered (or known) the essence of Āṭmā.

Brahmajñānī is compassionate to all ; no evil cometh from the Brahmajñānī.

Brahmajñānī always looks upon all equally, on whatever he looks he showers nectar.

Brahmajñānī is free from bondage, Brahmajñānī's yoga is pure.

Brahmajñānī's food is wisdom ; O Nānak, the meditation of Brahmajñānī is Brahmā.

Brahmajñānī (fixes his) hope on the One, Brahmajñānī doth never perish.

Brahmajñānī is pervaded by humility, Brahmajñānī delights in doing good to others.

Brahmajñāni is free from activity (of the three Guṇas), Brahmajñānī makes (his own mind) prisoner.

Whatever befalls a Brahmajñānī (he considers) it good, Divine qualities fructify in a Brahmajñānī.

Everything is uplifted along with a Brahmajñānī, O Nānak; the whole world repeats (the name of) the Brahmajñānī.

Brahmajñānī has one color (state of the mind, *i.e.*, Love). The Lord dwells with the Brahmajñānī.

Brahmajñānī is supported by the name, to the Brahmajñānī the Name is his all in all.

Brahmajñānī is ever awake in the Real, Brahmajñānī relinquishes egoism.

In the heart of the Brahmajñānī there is the highest bliss; in the Brahmajñānī's house there is ever peace.

Brahmajñānī dwells in happiness; O Nānak, there is no destruction for the Brahmajñānī.

Brahmajñāī is the knower of Brahmā; Brahmajñānī is ever in love with the One.

Brahmajñānī is free from anxiety, Brahmajñānī's belief is pure.

He is Brahmajñānī whom the Lord Himself makes (such); the glory of the Brahmajñānī is great.

A very fortunate person may see (meet) a Brahmajñanī. We should offer ourselves as a sacrifice for (lit. go round) a Brahmajñānī.

Maheshvara (Shiva the great Lord) seeks a Brahmajñānī, O Nānak.

The Brahmajñānī is the Supreme Lord Himself.
The Brahmajñānī is a priceless treasure.
Everything is in the heart of Brahmajñānī, he who knows the secret of the Brahmajñānī.
Let us ever salute the Brahmajñānī; we could not pronounce half a letter of the Brahmajñānī.
Brahmajñānī is the Lord of all; who can measure in speech the Brahmajñānī?
A Brahmajñānī alone knows the Goal of the Brahmajñānī.
Of the Brahmajñāni there is neither limit nor the other shore. O Nānak, we ever salute the Brahmajñāni.
Brahmajñānī is the maker of all creation. Brahmajñānī is the giver of mukṭi, yoga and life.
Brahmajñānī is the whole Spirit (Puruṣha) and ordainer.
Brahmajñānī is the protector of the unprotected, Brahmajñānī guards every one.
All this is the form of Brahmajñānī. Brahmajñānī is the Formless (Supreme Self) Himself.
The splendor (or grace) of the Brahmajñānī befits a Brahmajñānī alone. Brahmajñānī is the Treasure of all.

[Guru v. Sukhmani.]

He who causes no fear to others, and fears no one.
Say Nānak! hear O mind, call him Jñānī (wise)

[Guru ix.]

Here are some slokas on devotion to the Guruḍeva:

O Nānak! know that to be the ture Guru who unites (thee) with all, my dear.

[Guru i. Shrī Rāg.]

Every day a hundred times would (I) sacrifice (myself) unto (my) own Guru;
Who transformed me into God, and it did not take him long to do so.

[Guru i. Vara Asā.]

If a hundred moons and a thousand suns were to rise,
And there were so much light, without Guru there would be (still) awful darkness.

[Guru ii. Āsavara.]

Blessed be my true Guru, knower of Hari,
Who showed us friend and foe equal in our sight.

[Guru iv. Vara Vadhans.]

Guruḍeva is mother, Guruḍeva is father, Guruḍeva is the Supreme Lord;
Guruḍeva is friend, destroyer of ignorance, Guruḍeva is relative and real brother;
Guruḍeva is the giver and teacher of Hari's name;
Guruḍeva has realised the mantra;
Guruḍeva is the embodiment of peace, truth and enlightenment; Gurudeva's touch is higher than that of the philosopher's stone.
Guruḍeva is the Ṭīrṭha (place of pilgrimage), the tank of nectar (immortality), there is nothing beyond immersion in Guru's knowledge.

Guruḍeva the maker is the destroyer of all evil.
Guruḍeva is the purifier of all fallen ones.
Guruḍeva is primal, before ages, in every age; by repeating his Hari-Manṭra (we) are saved (lit. uplifted from the ocean of Samsāra).
O Lord, favor us with Guruḍeva's company, so that linked (attached) to him we deluded sinners may swim (across).
Guruḍeva, the true Guru, is Parabrahman, Supreme Lord; Nānak bows to Guruḍeva Hari.

[Guru v. Bavanakhari.]

O mother! I rejoice, for I have found the true Guru.

[Guru iii. Rāmkali.]

Let him fix the Guru's word in his heart.
And cease to associate with the five persons (desire, wrath, etc.)
Keep the ten organs under control.
Then in his self the light shall shine forth.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

To conclude these perhaps too numerous quotations, I will give some miscellaneous ones, full of beauty:

Think thou on the great qualities of the true Name at the ambrosial time (morning).

[Guru i. Japa.]

Even if we rub and scrub our body with water, still, O Brother! it is impure;

Let us bathe in the mighty waters of knowledge,
O Brother! so that the mind and body be purified.
[Guru i. Sorath.]

O heart! Love Hari as the lotus loves the waters;
It is buffeted by waves, but (the petals of) its love unfold.
[Guru i. Shrī Rāg.]

I forgot all distinctions (lit. anotherness, or I forgot altogether who was another),
Since I obtained the company of the good;
There was no enemy, no alien, I made peace with every one.
[Guru v. Kānara.]

All beings are His, He belongs to all beings.
Whom can we revile (or say he is low)? If there were another (we might do so).
[Guru iii. Āsa.]

Pause for one moment on the thought that if there is but one Self in all, where is there room for hatred? If there be but one Hari in all, where is the room for contempt? If there were more than One, if there were not One without a second, then might man be different from man and might quarrel with his brother; but if the same God abides in every heart, if the same Self animates every vehicle, where is the room for hatred or contempt? There is but One in all.

O Nānak, repeat Soham, Hamsa; by this repetition the three worlds are absorbed in Him.

[Guru i. Var Mārū.]

Call them not pure who wash their bodies and sit, O Nānak! Those alone are pure in whose heart He dwells.

[Guru i. Var Āsa.]

Those who practised contentment, they meditated on the true One.

They placed not their foot into evil, they did good deeds and earned virtue.

[Guru i. Āsa.]

He is Sannyāsī who serves the true Guru and removes the self from within;

Desires neither covering, nor food, takes what comes (to him) without thinking (or unasked.)

[Guru i. Mārū Rāg.]

Few attain Guru's favor and are centred in the fourth state.

[Guru iii. Majh.]

Of the things to be renounced, the most to be renounced are lust, hatred and avarice.

Hear thou! meditating on Hari's name do charity to all.

[Guru v. Majh.]

Without practising virtue, devotion is not possible.

[Guru i. Japa.]

In thy own home and palace find innate bliss; (thus) thou again shalt not return.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

O mind! practise such sannyās (renunciation): consider all abodes as forest, remaining unaffected, at heart; keep the matted locks of self-control, do the ablution of yoga, grow nails of niyāma (five observances).

Make (Divine) knowledge thy Guru, and teach thyself.

Besmear (yourself with) the ashes of the Name;

Let the love (good) of thy body (consist in) eating little, little sleep, compassion, forgiveness.

Practise good disposition, contentment, transcend the three Guṇas.

Do not let lust, anger, pride, avarice, obstinacy, deluded clinging (conquer you).

Then will you behold the reality (essence) of the Self and you will attain to the Supreme Spirit.

[Guru x. Shahda Hazam.]

Delay not in good; delay in evil.

[Guru v.]

Countless are the slanderers (that) burden themselves (with the sin of calumny).

If thou seekest thy own good, then do good, and let them call thee lowly.

[Guru i.Åsa.]

Weighed in the balance, he who bends down is precious.

[Guru i. Suhi.]

I am not good; none else is bad.

[Guru i.Suhi.]

If one becomes a slave of salves, and casts out the self, then he finds Hari.

[Guru iii.]

As a fish cannot live without water,
As a cuckoo cannot be satisfied without the raindrop,
As a deer (pierced, touched or enamored) by the sound (of a gong) runs towards it,
As a black bee, thirsting for the scent of a flower, finding it, gets himself imprisoned.
So the saints love God and are satisfied by seeing (Him).

[Guru v. Jaitsari.]

There are none who do not wrangle and oppose;
Show them to me and I will praise them.

[Guru i. Mārā.]

The devotees and worldly men seldom agree.

[Guru i. Majh.]

By the Guru's favor, practise Rāja Yoga.
There are few who annihilate duality (sense of

separation) and having destroyed it practise Rāja Yoga.

[Guru v. Gauri.]

He to whose eyes the collyrium of (Divine) Knowledge has been applied, he beholds all (as) splendor,
In the darkness of ignorance he sees not, and wanders again and again (in rebirth).

[Guru v. Sorāth.]

I sought Him in the ten quarters, I found Him in the house;
I met him, when the true Guru brought me face to face with Him.

[Guru i. Omkār.]

The delusion of whose breast (heart) is gone,
Hinḍū and Musulmān are the same before him.

[Guru x.]

One has become a shriven Sannyāsī, and another a Yogī, a Brahmachāri, a Yaṭi, is considered; a Hinḍū, a Turk (Musulmān) a Rafazi, Imāmshafi. But understand thou that humanity is one. The Maker, the Compassionate, is the same, the Nourisher, and the Kind One is the same; fall not into the error and delusion of the difference of duality, One is to be served; the Guruḍeva of all is one; one is the Nature and know thou the Light to be one. The temple and the mosque

are the same, Pūjā and Nimāz (muslim prayer) are one, all men are one, but many in manifestation; so Gods and demons are one, Yakṣhas and Gandharvas. Hinḍūs and Turks are due to the different nature of the garbs of various lands. The eyes, the ears, the body, the make is one, a combination of earth, air, fire, water; the signless Allah is the same; Purāṇas and Qurān are the same; one is the nature and one is the make.

As from one fire a crore of sparks arise, and becoming separate merge again into the (same) fire; as from one (heap of) dust many particles fill (the sky) and these particles again disappear in the same dust; as in one river many ripples are formed, but these ripples of water are called but water, so from the Universal Form conscious and unconscious beings have manifested, but they shall lose themselves into That from which they have come.

[Guru x. Kaviṭu.]

Surely there is nothing in all these to which the heart of every one of us cannot answer, which the heart of every one of us cannot echo, only longing that we had the same passion and devotion and only longing that our devotion might be as clear as his.

Such is the teaching and such is the heart of Sikhism. Is there anything in it which can serve but to bind together, to draw hearts close each to each, to bind men together in love? When you

think of Guru Nānak, think of one of those great Prophets of peace, who, from supreme love to God, would draw the blessed fruit of love to men; and then you will see that the Sikh brothers are helpers in the building up of the one nation out of India with no quarrel against any, with no hatred against any, with no strife to divide them from any other faith. If they are faithful to the teachings of their Guru, they should be friends and unifiers wherever they go, builders-up and constructors of the national life. We should not be far wrong if we said that in this religion of pure Bhakṭi, of love to God and man, we have one of the forerunners of that ancient Divine Wisdom, which, in these later days, the great Lodge has given to man; for here too is a unifier, a friend and a brother, here too is a lover and a joiner of those who are rivals. When we speak the name of Guru Nānak, we speak the name of peace, and may He who watches over His own community make it one of the elements for the building of our India.

THEOSOPHY

BROTHERS: As our President has just said, we have studied on a previous occasion and on this the seven religions that are found living side by side on the soil of India, and that have their adherents, one or another of them, in the various parts of the world. To-day we are not going to talk of religions but of Religion; not of the exoteric that divides but of the Spirit that unites; and we are to see what it is that in all ages of the world has been the root of every faith in turn, what has been THE RELIGION in which every separate religion inheres; why at the present age of the world this has come specially to the front, whereas ever before it has been, as it were, in the background, underlying and supporting all, but not asserting itself. What is the significance of its later coming, and its meaning in the history of the world?

Those who have studied religions carefully, every student of religions, as we may say, has practically agreed that they have a common basis. Go far, far back into the dim history of the past, when even the configuration of the globe was different from that which we know to-day, when the vast continent of Atlantis stood where now the waves of the Atlantic roll; nay, further back in time even still, when the yet older continent of Lemuria was found

where now there are only fragments of Australia, New Zealand and Madagascar, fragments of a continent long disappeared, long hidden. Both are in these later years recognised by science; Lemuria is declared by Haeckel, the German scientist, to be the cradle of the human race, as was taught by Madame Blavatsky before him. Atlantis is being recognised now by the evidence of the common fauna and flora, by the evidence of the races found alike in America and in Egypt, likenesses of religion, likenesses of hieroglyphics, so that the man who can translate the hieroglyphics of Egypt can translate those of the Mayas in Mexico. See how during the last one hundred and twenty years, from the end of the 18th century, when Dulaure and Dupuis wrote on the origin of faiths, see how during the whole of the 19th century, by student after student in the West, there has gradually grown up what is called the science of Comparative Mythology. Looking into the far, far past to which I have alluded, looking into the present, to the latest declarations of European research, one great truth comes out. As the antiquarian and archæologist dug down below the crust of the surface of the earth, and unburied city after city, these long buried fragments have given up their evidence as to the religions of the past, their doctrines, their founders, and their symbolism, and have proved their unity. Europeans with the longing for knowledge that distinguishes them, and the thirst for facts which you find as their characteristic, have been delving over the ancient world.

And what have they uncovered? They have dug down in one case through thirteen cities, built the one on the top of the other, each on ground that covered the ruins of a past one. A city was built on what was apparently solid ground; that city was dug through, then a layer of ground under the ruins of the city, and lo! beneath the ground another city. Then ground, the earth, again; through that once more, until the third city is discovered, and so down and down and down, till thirteen cities are unburied and only then the virgin soil is found. In another case, in the eighth city similarly unburied, a vast library was discovered of more than one hundred thousand volumes, volumes made of clay, written while the clay was soft and then baked hard and so preserved; vast temples of splendid architecture, records of kings who, thirty years ago, were spoken of as myths, but now are found to be historical monarchs, stretching back to seven thousand years before the Christian Era. Then in Egypt, tombs opened which have been closed for, at least, ten thousand years, and from the mummied bodies of the dead fragments of papyrus taken, on which were written the beliefs of the ancient Egyptians, and the knowledge that the soul needed on the other side of death, to guide him through the intricacies of the unseen world. Treasures again in ancient China, leading up to the famous Golden Temple of Atlantis, and allusion to the Lord of the Golden Gate, who was the mighty Emperor of that long perished Empire. The earth of the dead giving

up its secrets, and all bearing testimony to one mighty truth—the unity of religions.

Not that alone. As explorers go among savage tribes, among barbarian peoples, at first they see only the outer worship of idol, of fetish, of totem, and think this is the religion of the people. But presently they come into nearer touch with the people themselves. They win their confidence, and the people begin to tell them something more than the outer symbols have revealed. They speak of a mighty Father, of an all-embracing Presence, of One, too mighty to be named, too loving to need sacrifice or offering from His children—a thought that to them is vague, that to them is far off, but ever the same tradition, that this was taught by the Founder of their race, and has been handed down from generation to generation of wise men, as the heart of the faith that has become so degraded in modern times.

What is the result of all the searchings? That I can only indicate by two or three points, such as I have mentioned. There is no doubt about the result. The result has founded a great school of Comparative Mythology. I give it its own name. That school has declared in the West, and proved it up to the hilt, that all religions have a single root, that all religions have the same doctrines, that all the religions have the tradition of a divine human Founder, that all the religions teach the same morality, that all the religions use the same symbolism. And on this there is no doubt; for things have been dug up with the

symbols on them: the cross found in Etruscan graves beyond the memory of man, baked into the clay vessel that stands at the foot of the corpse; and the moment the grave is opened, so ancient is it, that a flash, as it were, of the corpse is seen and then but dust. But the clay remains. In Maya temples unburied, in Egyptian tombs unsealed, the same symbols of cross, of triangle, of point, of circle, familiar to every student. The comparative mythologist draws his conclusion. It was aimed originally against one faith, Christianity, for it was in Christendom, from Christendom, that the discoveries were made. What was the conclusion? All religions have one basis; all religions have one foundation; all religions are forms of the same idea; and then—that foundation is human ignorance. The savage barbarian personified the powers of nature; he saw the sun in his majesty, he heard the wind in its fury, the earthquake shattered the mountain, the torrent over-flooded the valley, and he said: "These are the Gods who are angry, I must propitiate them and make them my friends." And out of that personification of the savage, said the comparative mythologist, every religion of the world has arisen, no matter how refined it may be now, no matter how philosophic it later might have become, no matter what may be the crudities of the old and the perfections of the new, this is the basis of all religions—human ignorance, ignorance of the savage personifying nature and seeing that as God. Out of that every faith has arisen, out of that every faith has grown, their birth-mark shows that they are all the

same, and what can the same be save the sameness of ignorance in the human savage, out of whom we have evolved? That was the attack that was made upon religions—a fatal attack, because based on facts, because based on what could be seen and handled; and these are the things which appeal most to the majority.

And then what happened? Ah! before the greatest of the discoveries were yet made, before these later unburyings which have strengthened the facts, there came a whisper in another voice, there came a quiet message of another kind: "Yes, the facts are true; only the ignorant can deny. The earth holds buried in her bosom thousands of other facts still more remarkable, thousands of other proofs still more overwhelming, thousands of things yet to be discovered, all of which will strengthen the conclusion that religions have but one basis and are founded on one set of facts. But while the comparative mythologists are accurate in their facts, they are wrong in their deduction. Deduction is not a fact, but only their idea of the meaning of the fact. Separate the fact from the deduction, separate the mistake from the truth, and see in all these signs hidden in the earth, see in all these discoveries from the unburied past, see and proclaim the truth that while all religions have one basis, that basis is the Divine Wisdom and not human ignorance, that basis is in the knowledge given by the Sages, who are but one body, the spiritual Guardians of mankind. The facts are there; the deduction is wrong."

Is this message true? How are we to judge? What is the evidence? There is a point that, until the word was spoken that it was not inevitable to take human ignorance as the root, had not struck the religious world. The evidence is clear and plain that all may read who care to study. Did the savage evolve in his brutality, from his idol worship, from his fetichism, and from his totemism, did he evolve the idea of that wondrous over-arching Presence which he dimly believes in to-day, and says is a tradition of the past? How out of his narrow brain, how out of his ignorant mind, how out of his cruel and blood-thirsty heart, did there rise this wondrous idea of a Universal Father, of one over-arching Presence, that embraces all in love? What says, not the savage, but the literature of the past, the literature of China, the literature of Persia, the literature of India, the literature of Egypt —what does it say? It tells us of mighty thoughts, that no modern has been able to rival in sublimity. Take the *Classic of Purity* from China, and tell me if modern China can produce a gem of spiritual and philosophic thought fit to place side by side with that inheritance that, they say, came from far off Atlantis? Take the mighty teachings of India, the glorious Upaniṣhaṭs, and tell me what modern writer, great as he may be, can write with that sublimity, with that depth of philosophic thought, with that magnificence of poetic diction, of the Supreme and Universal Self? Take the Gāthās of Zoroastrianism, mangled and fragmentary as they are; can you read them without feeling the breathing of a knowledge

which no modern can match? Take the *Book of the Dead*, of Egypt, taking its name from the breasts of the dead from whom it was gathered, and read its sublime utterences, its deep philosophy, its mystic yearnings, and tell me whether in your modern writings, you will find such thought as that? Does religion grow, has it advanced, is it refined from the crude imaginings of the savage? Is that the evidence? or is it the evidence that the Divine Men who gave the knowledge gave the highest at the beginning, and that those who followed have lowered it and not raised it, and by their later ignorance have confused it, instead of illuminating it?

I appeal to the literature of the world, as to whose age there is no doubt amongst scholars; I appeal to the Upaniṣhaṭs, even taking them at the miserably short time that the western Orientalist gives to them; I appeal to the Gāthās of the Zoroastrian; I appeal to the fragments unburied from the past; and I challenge the modern world—Where is your wisdom that can stand side by side with this? Ah! you have a great many facts, you can tell us a great deal about the outer world, you can explain to us much of the phenomena among which we live; but where is your knowledge of the Divine, where is your knowledge of the heights of morality, and of the depths of philosophic thought? Your books are child's play beside the thoughts of the ancients, the babbling of children beside the words of the Saviors of the race.

In morality, can your loftiest flights of morality—

if lofty flights there be, as the *Data of Ethics* of Herbert Spencer, as one of the greatest of modern writers—be put beside the ethical teachings of the Lord Buddha, and does the world find in it the inspiration to noble living that His words have exercised for more than 2,000 years?

The evidence is overwhelming. Every religion looks *back* to its Founder for its highest teachings. Can the Archbishop of to-day rival the teachings of Christ? Can the Musulmān Moulvi of to-day rival the teachings of the great Arabian Prophet? Can the Zoroastrian Mobed speak such words of morality as breathe from his own ancient literature? Where is the modern Brāhmaṇa who can speak as Shrī Kṛshṇa and Rāmachandra spoke, or give us the noble morality that we find in the ancient literature? I appeal to history against imagination; I appeal to facts against western fancies; and I declare—and I challenge any one who had studied to deny—that the proof is clear of Divine Wisdom underlying all religions, that it is the diseased fancy of the comparative mythologist which has seen in ignorance the root of all which has made man heroic, of all which has comforted man in death and ennobled him in life, which has driven the martyr to the stake, which has sent the hero joyfully to death, which has made the happiness and the glory of the Saint and the wisdom of the Sage. Let them be silent before an antiquity that they cannot rival, before the teachings of the divine Guardians of humanity that no modern pigmy can even touch with the tips of his fingers.

The root of every religion is DIVINE WISDOM.

My brothers, I have sometimes wished the word "Theosophy" had not been used, because to the ignorant it gives the idea of a new thing. Of course every scholar knows it is not new, but was used among the Greeks, among the Neoplatonists. In the classical language of western Europe, Theos is God and Sophia is Wisdom. Divine Wisdom is the English translation of the word Theosophy. Take it in Samskṛt and you have the *Brahma Vidyā*. Better in a way, one fancies it might have been, among the English-speaking people, if only the name Divine Wisdom had been used; for then who would dare to arrogate it as his own, would dare to exclude his brother from it; who would dare to say that "it is mine and not thine," or make it separate —the one all-embracing Truth? The moment you get a name, you seem to get a label; this man is a Theosophist and that man is not. There is where our ignorance spoils the message of the Mighty Ones, and our arrogance and self-assertion narrow the grandeur of Their truth. Divine Wisdom—what can that be but the all-inclusive truth that as God is one and indivisible, so is His Wisdom all-embracing? It is this whole body of Divine Wisdom, of which we know a letter or two, scarcely a syllable, certainly not a word, to which really belongs the name of Theosophy. We call our fragments by the same name. The divine Teachers of men—that wonderful group of Men who have climbed to perfection, and who love Their race so well that They will not leave it, but stay with it to

guide and help and forward the evolution of mankind —have in Their own hands the Divine Wisdom, as the precious inheritance of the race. They send out one of their number, a Manu: He builds a race; He gives their polity, He gives them their exoteric faith, He gives them the inner mystic meaning of the fragment of truth He imparts. They send out a Zarathushtra and He goes westward, giving to a different sub-race another fragment of the same teaching, suited to their special evolution. They send out an Orpheus, and He goes to Greece, and there gives the religion of beauty, suitable to the evolution of that branch of the Keltic race. They send out a Buddha, and He comes to preach an infinite compassion, and to prepare a splendid moral teaching for non-metaphysical races. They send out a Christ, and He stands by the cradle of civilisation which has just to be born in the West, to bless it, to guide it, to train it, to give it the special type of religion most suited for its energetic, for its active, concrete-minded thought. They send out a Muhammad and He goes to Arabia; He civilises, He teaches, He builds, He brings back to Europe, that had lost it, the science which made the renaissance of learning possible. And many another They send out, as the Nānak that we were thinking of yesterday, as Mahāvīra and His predecessors that we spoke of the day before. Every Prophet from this same Lodge, the same mighty Brotherhood, bringing the same message, modified only by the circumstance of the time, the same external truths identical in every faith: the One Supreme Existence, the One without a

second; innumerable hosts of Shining Ones, Devas or Angels, who carry out His will and administer His law; the human Spirit, like Himself, of His own nature, unfolding his divine powers by reincarnation and by karma, until he stands a God manifest, as he has ever been a God in his own inherent nature. These are some of the truths you find in every religion, and if you take the teachings of the Founders, there will not be one of them lacking; but sometimes in modern time, one or another has slipped away by ignorance, and so a gap is left in the fair edifice of that special religion.

At last the time came when the great Brotherhood foresaw that the age was ripe, and that the religons of the world should now have re-supplied what they had lost by efflux of time, and should learn their unity amid diversity of external forms; and then came the latest message, the message of the Divine Wisdom, in its own name, to the world.

Now what does it mean to the world? It means, as all history tells us, a great step forward in civilisation and a change in the type of the civilisation. I said, as all history tells us. Look back as you will, in the history of the past—and wise men read history that they may understand the present and forecast the future—look back at the history of the past, and where do you find a civilisation founded which was not preceded by a spiritual movement? First, an Āryan race with its Manu had its origin and its polity, ere it was builded into the mighty people of ancient Āryavārṭā. Among

the Irānians, in the religion of the prophet Zarathushtra a civilisation grew up, flourishing under its fostering influence. Greece and Rome developed under the influence of the religions which were founded on the Orphic tradition derived from India, derived from Egypt, made stronger and more scientific by Pythagoras the wonderful, made beautiful by all the art of Greece. Come later down, and see how Rome is going to die, and when the vast hordes of barbarians is going to sweep down over the corpse of the Empire of Rome and Byzantium, see how before that cataclysm the Christ is born, and another form of religion is ready to take up the seething elements of dying Rome, and to watch over the birth-pangs of the Christendom that is to be born. See when the Arabian civilisation is to appear, and the Moor and the Saracen are to illuminate the western world, how, ere they can move, Muhammad must come to guide and direct, to shape their thoughts, to mould their teachings.

Are you so blind that you cannot read, or do you think so little that, when a new birth-hour is upon humanity, you cannot see the signs of the coming birth and understand its nature?

What is the difference of this modern message of the Divine Wisdom, as compared with the messages of the past? Every one of those founded a new religion. Every one of them made a special faith, every one of them shaped a special civilisation. All who came within the pale were believers; all who were outside were unbelievers. The new message builds up

no new pale, finds no new religion, makes no separation between man and man; it declares that every religion is God-given, and has in it all that is needed for those who follow it. It bids the Hiṇḍū remain a Hiṇḍū, but drop his formalism, his pride and his feeling of being above the other religions of the world and of having to himself a special knowledge while others are outside. It bids the Pārsī remember that he has a religion given by a divine Prophet, but that he in following Him, must honor the Prophets of others. It says to the Christian: Do not think that your faith is unique, it is all you need; go below the surface, understand its philosophy, remember its mysticism and do not be bound only by the outer formalism which has been imposed by ignorance and not by knowledge. It says to the Musulmān: What is this calling unbelievers men of other faiths, when the Prophet said: "Say, we make no distinction between the Prophets, but every man shall follow his own leader." Then, as this message peals forth in the world, men of other faiths remember that after all it is not new. The Hiṇḍū answers: Why, I was taught that in the *Bhagavaḍ-Gīṭā*, for did not Shrī Kṛshṇa say: "On any road whereby a man comes to me, on that road will I meet him, for all roads are mine, O son of Kunṭī?" And the Christian says: Why, did not the Christ say: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Does not the Sufī say:

"Why, I have learned that as many ways there are to God as there are breaths among the sons of men." Whence then this narrowness, this ignorance; it is our pride, our desire to have a truth from which other men are shut out, that we may feel ourselves unique and divinely favored, whereas the glory of the Spirit is in that it includes all and excludes none, and that none in whom the Divine Spirit dwells—and He dwells in all—can be shut out from the all-embracing love of God. But men say: Religions teach differently. One says: Go this way; another says: Go that way; one says: Walk along this road; another says: Walk along mine. Don't we do the same? You want to come to Adyar. You are coming from Ceylon, from Trichinopoly, from Madura. You walk to the north, and if a man says: Which way shall I go to Adyar? the answer is: "Go north". A man comes from Benares or Allahabād, and says: How shall I go to Adyar? the answer is: "Go south". A clear contradiction; there is no doubt about it. When a man from Bombay says: How shall I get to Adyar? the answer is: "Go east;" and from Burma: "Go west". Contradictions manifest. Ah! God is the centre and we are all on the circumference; we come from many points, but there is but one centre to the circle—and that is God Himself. He has placed us in many places, all round the circle of His world. He is One; from Him we went out to the circumference, and to Him we shall return to the centre. Our faces may be set in different direction, but that is because we

start from different points. He is the one and the same centre, and we all seek Him, and none but Him, though we go by different roads.

But I said, there was a significance in this. It tells us of the birth of a new civilisation. Another great religious impulse has come to the world, and it runs before another great step forward in the civilisation of the race. It means the birth of a new era; it means the coming of a higher social stage; it means the dawning of a fairer world; it means an onward step in the climbing of humanity towards God; and as every civilisation bears the mark of the spiritual movement which preceded and heralded it, and which surrounds and guides it, therefore we know that the coming civilisation shall not be of the competition of the present but of co-operation and of brotherly love, shall not be based on race antagonisms but on race unions, on love between race and race. It knows no outcast, it knows no alien, it knows no stranger; every one is included in its all-embracing love; and the civilisation to be born of it shall be the civilisation of Brotherhood, when men shall love each other, and worship under many forms the One, the Indivisible. For the truth is that the Divine Wisdom is like the sun in heaven, and as the sun shines upon every part of the earth, shines down into every man's compound, no matter how high the walls that he may build round it, for the sun is higher than all, so does the Divine Wisdom shine down into every religion; and though a man may build barriers, the sun of Divine Wisdom is

higher than them all, and it shines on every man's face and illuminates it, and at last men will realise that the sun is one.

But you see so many faiths, because you need Manas, the mind, to grow and develope. Take a ray of our sun-light and pass it through a prism; on the other side, seven colors will be painted. Take a spiritual truth and pass it through the prism of the human intellect, and the one white truth shines out in seven different colors. That is necessary, because man's mind must be developed, his intellect must grow; it grows by trouble and struggle, it grows by challenge and by questioning, it grows by fighting and by war. But higher than intellect is Buḍḍhi, the Pure Reason, that sees unity where Manas sees division, and higher yet the Spirit which is the same in all, and which, realised, makes the feeling of human unity.

Now we may say that when the Theosophical Society was founded, there was made what is called a nucleus. What is a nucleus? A nucleus is the growing point, the growing centre rather, in a cell, wherein all the life-forces are gathered and whence they radiate out. Take a cell as science sees it, and the scientific man will tell you of the growth of the cell; its organisation, its multiplication, depend on a tiny point visible under a high power of the microscope. From that all organisation, all growth, all multiplication, must proceed. That is a nucleus. That is what the Society is—a nucleus, nothing more. A little thing, a small thing, but in it are the life-forces which

spread in every direction, which will organise, will cause growth, will enable multiplication to take place. A nucleus. That is our Society.

Is it not proved by the few years that lie behind us whether, wherever the Society has gone, growth in religion has taken place? It came to India; Hinḍūism began to revive. It spread to Ceylon; Buḍḍhism slowly began to be vitalised. It spread through Christendom; you find the mystic side returning to Christianity, and reincarnation preached in the pulpits of Christian churches. Wherever it goes, it proves its nature as a nucleus; almost imperceptible in its numbers, but how mighty the force, because a nucleus is a thing of the *life*. A nucleus is only an organ that the life has made for itself. It is nothing but a few scraps of matter arranged in a particular way by the life. The life is everything, and that is the life that all the great Teachers are spreading, through Theosophy, in all the religions of the world. Every great Teacher in turn vivifies His own faith by using this instrument that has been made; and wherever it goes, new life comes, not *by* the Society, but only *through* it as a channel.

And what more? As some have said: Why concern yourselves only with spiritual matters? Why should not the Society plunge itself into other matters, into politics, into social reforms and what not? That is not its work. Have you, again, read history so badly? What is the first mark of degeneration of a people? The lessening of spirituality. Ah! my Hinḍū brothers, need I say that to you, who know that

as spirituality passed out of your religion, India went down and down. Trace the order. First the spirituality lessens, then intellectual power diminishes, and lastly, material presperity grows less and less. That is the order through which every nation passes, when it is going downward. First, the religion shows it; then the intellect shows it; and lastly, *as a result*, the outer prosperity shows it. How then shall it be re-built? By beginning with the spirituality, by building up again the spiritual life, by vivifying again the spiritual thought, by telling men that only where the Spirit is, there is the source of life, and that where that lives, there live all good things. That has been the first work, the great work of the Society. And the second stage is the intellectual. Do you notice how the Society has gradually taken that up, how it has helped religions in their educative influences as well, and how, the second stage of its work here, where it is so necessary, is to build up the right type of education, so that the intellect may develop, and yet be dominated by the Spirit and accompanied by right emotion and right conduct. That is the second stage of the theosophical work, to give the intellect back to the nation. Given the spiritual, given the intellectual, the material will follow of itself. That is but an effect, that is but a result. A spiritual and highly trained intellectual people, they can shape their own road, they can build their own prosperity. As prosperity vanished and the intellect degenerated, as spirituality passed, so will prosperity come back inevitably after a true religion and right education

have been established. That is the road that some of us, following our great Teachers, are striving to tread, not ourselves as teachers but as messengers merely, taking no authority but only telling what we have heard and seen, asking no man to believe until his own intellect is convinced. For the worst hypocricy of all is to say "I believe," ere the intellect has been illuminated, and to repeat the creed with the lips, which has no place in the intellect, no answer in the heart.

No man may be coerced into any form of belief. Who shall dare to coerce the free Spirt, finding his own way, shaping his own future, according to his own word. Ātmā wills, and all follows that will, and who shall dictate to another the road along which he shall go?

Keep your own faith, but honor the faiths of your brothers; religious unity is no more to be found in the form of a single religion, but in the realisation that all faiths are one, that all faiths have the same origin and lead to the same end. Drop all the words of reproach that we all too often use in speaking of men of other faiths; do not let harsh terms come from the mouth. The term Mlechchha, the term Infidel, the term Unbeliever, the term Heathen, these are of the devil of separateness and not of the divine Spirit of unity. Do not let your lips speak hard words. Your brother differs from you, What does it matter?

Are you so infallible, do you so hold the whole truth, that you shall blame him because his view of

truth is a little different from your own? Why what a poor thing truth would be, if you or I could grasp it all, if you or I could see it all, if you or I could speak it all. Truth is infinite as God, and who shall declare His powers? Every truth is a ray from Him, as every beauty is a ray of His Beauty. Everything that is fair and lovely is but a broken fragment coming from His light. Why should we hate? There is more that unites us than separates us. The things that separate are external—the skin, the hair, the color, the race, the bowing towards east or west. The special names and labels that we give to universal truths—are these things to separate the sons of God, the heirs of immortality, the Gods-in-the-making, who have but one hope, one life and one Self?

Is not the world fairer for the different faiths? Do we not know more truths, because so many have spoken differently? If a man has a truth to speak that others know not, let him speak it out. Let us listen. It may be that God has shown him some glimpse of His light to which our eyes are blind. Do not silence him. By silencing him you may be silencing the very voice of God. There is no such thing as a heretic. There is only the eye that sees the truth in a little different way, that we may learn and make our truth the richer because our brother has told us something that before we did not know. Religion, I have thought sometimes, is a mighty crown which is to crown humanity in days to come. When a crown is being made for some Imperial coronation, does the jeweller choose jewels only of one

color? Does he choose only the emerald or the ruby, the topaz or the amethyst, the pearl or the diamond, and make the Imperial Crown of one color and of one set of jewels only? No, no; he takes every color and every jewel that he can find on the surface of the world, and seeks fresh shades, fresh hues and fresh colors; he rejoices when he finds some new shade in the emerald or the ruby that will add one glint more to the Imperial Diadem. So with the religions of the world. Each Religion is a jewel with its own color; each religion is a gem with its own hue; and all are taken by the mighty Jeweller, in order to form the crown which He will place on the brow of Humanity. He takes every gem with its own color and does not try to make it like its neighbor, but rather unlike, the more unlike the better; He fastens them together with the gold of Love, He sets them in the setting of Knowledge, and at the very top, He places the Kohinoor of the Divine Wisdom, the white diamond which has in it every color and shows no one hue alone. Such is the crown of the future, such is the diadem that God is preparing for Humanity; and when it is ready and every religion is set in love and in knowledge, then God will place it on the head of the Son of Man, and Humanity, enthroned on earth, will at last know its unity and know it is one with the Divine Oneness. Who then, in that glorious day, shall regret the difficulties of the past, when the splendid consummation is reached?